

VOLUME SEVEN • NUMBER THREE • FALL 1986

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Affirmation Center for Education

The Desert Experience



Celibacy in Pastoral Ministry



Polarization Endangers the Church

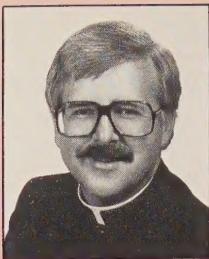


Continuing Religious Formation

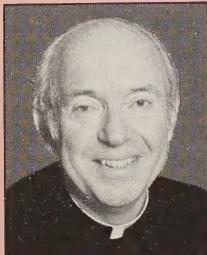


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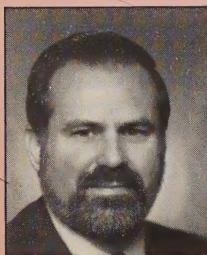
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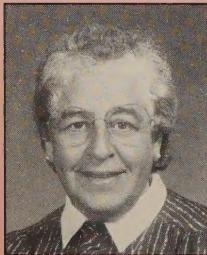
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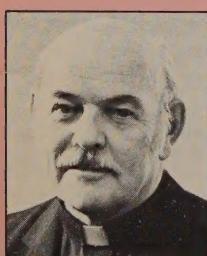
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Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate to the Executive Editor, Linda Amadeo, 20 Park Plaza, Suite 1001, Boston, MA 02116. Copy should be typewritten double spaced on 8½ × 11 inch white paper, 70 characters per line and 28 lines per page. Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 4,500 words (15 pages) with no more than 10 listings in the bibliography; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide names of author(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Illustrations, if any, should be submitted as high-quality, glossy, unmounted black-and-white photographic prints. Do not send original artwork.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

Book reviews, which should not exceed 600 words in length, should be sent to the Book Review Editor, Jon O'Brien, S.J., D.O., Jesuit Community, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20057.

Unaccepted manuscripts will not be returned unless requested and submitted with a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

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EDITORIAL

A TIME TO GIVE AND A TIME TO RECEIVE

Since the day I entered Sacred Heart Novitiate in Los Gatos, California, in August 1947, I have been hearing Jesuit superiors and formation personnel tell me and all of my brothers in the Order that we should always be prepared to let go of the ministries we have undertaken as soon as there are others in the church who can take over and accomplish them. Such *mobility* and *detachment* were values highly prized by our founder, Ignatius of Loyola, and they have been praised and recommended by all of the Fathers General who have succeeded him in leading the Society of Jesus for more than four centuries. As a result, Jesuits, whose lives are inspired and shaped through experiencing the Ignatian "Spiritual Exercises," stand ready to give up the administration of schools, parishes, and any additional apostolic works that others are able and want to continue for God's glory and the good of souls.

Consequently, with a desire to do what I think Ignatius would do, and with deep spiritual joy, I am giving over to Father Thomas Kane and the House of Affirmation, which he leads, the ministry of editing and publishing HUMAN DEVELOPMENT from now on. The House of Affirmation has for many years been demonstrating in the United States, and abroad, both competence and zeal in educating, healing, counseling, and motivating thousands of members of the clergy and religious orders in the same spirit that prompted our staff at the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development to initiate this world-encompassing publishing venture. We have thoroughly enjoyed producing this quarterly journal and will never cease being grateful to God and to our readers, writers, staff, editorial board, benefactors, and all others who have helped us to make this ministry successful. I am certain that Father Kane and his colleagues will do a superb job of continuing and improving what we have had the pleasure of starting. I wish them God's best blessings on all their efforts to serve and help develop countless leaders for the church and the world of the future.

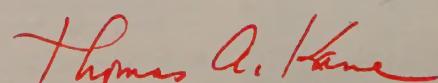


James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.
Editor Emeritus

In the 1980 inaugural issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, the then Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Jean Jadot, encouraged Father James Gill to lead this new journal in response to the challenge of John Paul II: "It is necessary to seek a proper expression of the relationship between the Church and the wide field of modern anthropology and the human sciences." For six years we have seen HUMAN DEVELOPMENT respond in an inviting and meaningful way to the words of our Holy Father under the careful creativity of priest, physician, and psychiatrist James J. Gill, S.J.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT has been a gift of God to all of us who believe that spiritual growth is related to the vitality of the whole person. The vitality of Father Gill in "letting go" of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT sets an example for all of us in regard to detachment and fidelity to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. As the new Editor-in-Chief of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, I accept this gracious gift that Father Gill demonstrates. I also thank him; I am encouraged by his confidence and his continued fraternal concern. He will now be Editor-Emeritus, but by no means is he retiring: Father Gill will be called on for advice and will continue his medical practice, academic pursuits, and heavy lecture schedule around the world.

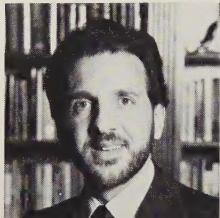
It is my goal to see that HUMAN DEVELOPMENT continue to challenge our thought and encourage our faith. I thank Linda Amadeo and other staff members for staying on with me, and I welcome the new staff. Together, we pledge ourselves to the excellence that Father Gill has established with HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. We welcome articles from around the world. We welcome a response from our readers. It is our combined task to bring the Word of God into our daily experience, in order to redeem and liberate that experience. Let us be gentle with one another in the process.



Thomas A. Kane, Ph.D., D.P.S.
Editor-in-Chief

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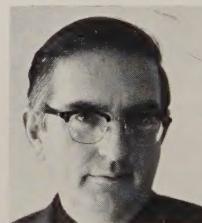
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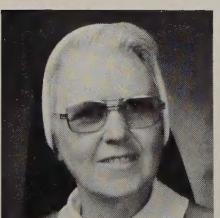


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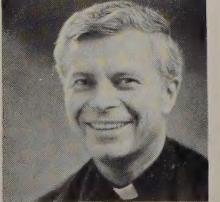
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Warning Demands Repetition

In your Summer 1986 issue, you chose to include a filler rather than a full-scale article on the threat that cocaine currently poses, especially to the young. I wish you had given the subject a more extensive treatment.

The recent deaths of an all-American college basketball player (Len Bias) and a young professional football player (Don Rogers) have shown all of us that we need to know much more than most of us do about the risk people take when using cocaine. The newspaper *USA Today* reported recently that 17% of the students on college campuses are using the drug. *The New York Times* records pharmacologist Carl Pfeiffer, M.D., as warning, "Cocaine sensitizes the heart to the normal stimulant effect of the body's adrenalin, which ordinarily just makes the heart beat faster. Under the influence of cocaine, however, the heart muscle is overstimulated and crazy twitches of the heart called fibrillation result. This fibrillation of the lesser chamber of the heart, or atrium, is reversible, but fibrillation of the major chamber, or ventricle, is seldom reversible. Attempts at resuscitation of the heart may bruise the heart and stimulate a myocardial clot in the artery." He adds, "As long as the recreational popularity of cocaine remains, more sudden cardiac deaths loom on the horizon."

You had better keep giving us information about the harmful drugs the young are abusing. Those of us who teach or counsel them need to know all the facts we can learn, so that we can help them become realistic about the risks they are taking.

Fredrick Stenson
New York, New York

Self-affirmation Essential

I appreciated reading the article "Asceticism Today" by John Carroll Futrell, S.J. (Spring 1986). With the changes that have occurred in the church and religious life over the last twenty years, I believe we are

only beginning to search out the spirituality needed today and in the future.

I support the areas of asceticism that John Futrell suggests in his article and would like to add the asceticism of self-affirmation. With so much brokenness in our world today, especially within family life, a healthy self-image is a rare experience and difficult to maintain. Women, especially, are inclined—because of the history and present reality of the church—to feel that they are inferior and less gifted human beings than men are.

St. Catherine of Siena states that self-knowledge and appreciation of oneself is fundamental to holiness. Creation spirituality also reminds us that we need to begin our spiritual journey by recognizing that we are originally blessed, created in the image and likeness of God. We are limited human beings but created by a loving Creator who made us good.

Holiness, it seems to me, means starting and moving through the *via positiva* to the other states of spiritual growth. This first step is the asceticism of self-affirmation whereby I choose repeatedly to believe that God has created me good but not complete. Although affirmation is at times needed from others, it is of no value if there is no basic self-affirmation. Belief in oneself cannot be substituted for affirmation from others.

To be a minister in our world today we are called to empower others, to help them to recognize the beauty and goodness of God within themselves and in our world. We must empower ourselves, that is, affirm the goodness of God and the presence of God in our own lives. I am only able to do that for others in a free, undemanding manner if I feel my own worth and basic goodness.

Nancy Brown, S.C.
Herring Cove, Nova Scotia

Menace Should Be Publicized

I have read issue after issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT during recent years and have seen no comments about AIDS except in Jon O'Brien's review (Summer

1986) of AIDS: A Catholic Call for Compassion, by Eileen P. Flynn. Don't you think you ought to be helping us, your readers, to develop compassionate but realistic attitudes about those whose sexual behavior is resulting in their contracting and transmitting this horrible disease?

You ought to be telling your readers all over the world what *Time* magazine just learned at a U.S. Public Health Service conference: "Experts on the disease speculated that AIDS will multiply more than ten times by the end of 1991, the caseload rising from 21,517 known cases to 270,000, the death toll from the 11,713 so far to 179,000." The conference brought out the fact, according to *Time*, that "increasingly, AIDS will affect heterosexuals, and it will spread fast outside of such hard-hit cities as San Francisco and New York. An estimated 1 million to 1.5 million Americans have been exposed to the AIDS virus, and up to 30% of these could develop the syndrome."

U.S. News & World Report, reporting on STDs (sexually transmitted diseases), was even more alarming in stating, "According to the Federal Center for Disease Control, the nation is in the grip of an STD epidemic that infects 33,000 people a day. That figures up to 12 million cases a year, up from 4 million in 1980. At this rate, one in four Americans between ages 15 and 55 eventually will acquire an STD."

Don't you think you owe it to your readers to equip them with facts like these that they will need to know if they are going to make any contribution at all to the urgent task of stemming the tide of this monstrous but preventable epidemic?

George Thompkins
Los Angeles, California

Water Is Best Sports Drink

In a country such as the United States, where so many millions of people exercise daily to keep their bodies fit, it is not surprising to find a variety of companies advertising their beverages as being just the right solution for the athlete's dehydration problem. For example, we read the ad, "Gatorade Thirst Quencher is scientifically formulated to replace water, salts (electrolytes), and vitamin C lost by active athletes in training and competition." Or, "Excel Energy Drink has been developed through extensive scientific and clinical research and has been shown to enhance endurance, performance, and post-exercise recovery."

But *Nutrition*, by Evelyn Tribole, a textbook written for professional dieticians, makes the statement that unless a person exercises continuously for more than two hours at a time, there is nothing other than the water in such sports drinks that has been shown to be of value to the athlete.

Tribole, a registered dietician in Laguna Hills, California, and a member of the National Council Against Health Fraud, says, "What an athlete needs to be concerned about is fluid replacement, getting water into their system, and the faster the better. Athletes cannot depend on the sense of thirst to tell them when to take a drink, because during exercise the thirst response is blunted. An athlete can lose over 3 percent of his body weight through sweat before feeling thirsty even when water is readily available."

Robert Ferrigno, who studied the value of commercial sports drinks, states, "New research indicates that those made with high concentrations of glucose and sucrose may be less effective than water at replenishing body fluids lost

during exercise." He adds, "One study conducted by Dave Costill of Ball State University demonstrated that drinks containing more than 2.5 percent simple sugar impede gastric emptying, a matter of critical concern, since the faster the fluids leave the stomach, the faster they can get on with the job of cooling us off." Another report, printed in *Research Quarterly* and adding confirmation to Costill's studies, says that Gatorade, which contains 6 percent glucose sugar, empties the stomach 35 percent slower than water. Nevertheless, this product holds an estimated 90 percent of the total sports drink market.

Tribole observes, "None of these [commercial] formulations leaves the stomach as fast as water. It should be noted that electrolytes, vitamins, and minerals—all of which slow the rate of gastric emptying—are not needed during athletic competition." Gene Adams, a California State University physiologist, explains, "The real key to safe exercising is in replacing water lost in sweat, and not worrying about the minerals."

Regarding sugar and minerals, Adams believes, "these drinks . . . are too sweet and too salty. Unless you exercise strenuously for over two hours at a time, you just don't need them."

Summarizing his studies, Ferrigno concludes, "If you exercise continuously for less than two hours at a time, there is no research that indicates the need for a drink that replenishes sugar, vitamins, minerals, or electrolytes. Your body has all of those it needs; all it requires is water to keep it going."

Exploring the Psychospiritual Dimensions of Personal Change

THE DESERT EXPERIENCE

JOSEPH NICOLOSI, Ph.D., and JO ROTUNNO, M.A.

The image of the desert is symbolic to most persons living in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The Exodus, a symbol of the journey from slavery to freedom, can easily be applied to the parallel journey within the self. The desert represents personal crisis and its corresponding psychological state of alienation. "Desert" literally means "no place." Deserts have always been seen as breaks in habitable living spaces, the wastelands that had to be crossed to move from one viable environment to another.

The word *deserere*, the Latin root for desert, means both letting go and joining with, as in a series. The desert, then, is the space in our experience of change where we learn what must be left behind and what must be embraced. It is the space in which the familiar and meaningful flow of the events of our lives seems disrupted and, through reflection, we seek to understand what has happened to us. Although most of us associate the desert with barrenness and aridity, we also know that it is filled with life, but we must know how to *look for* what is living there.

CYCLE OF CHANGE

The crises and conflicts of our lives, which lead us into an interior desert, are catalysts of our psychological and spiritual growth. A crisis can be sud-

den and profound, in the form of an external event, or it can emerge subtly from within as a growing awareness that a particular life stance has ceased to have meaning. Response to crisis may be correspondingly dramatic or gradual, but it almost always involves some pain.

A crisis is an event or life situation that occasions one's entry into a cyclic process. The term "passage" describes one's overall response to the crisis, including the experiences that arise from it, and the period of time during which the new reality is being incorporated into one's world view. If the passage is negotiated successfully, the individual is able to transcend the particular experience and recognize its relative place among other life events. One then chooses a response to the event and, in some way, acts differently as a result. One is changed.

EGO VERSUS SELF

The authenticity of the response a person makes to a life situation can be measured by whether he or she is responding mainly from the ego or from the deeper self. The notions of ego and self are often confused; many people use the terms interchangeably. The church has compounded the confusion by popularizing the term "self-denial." Contemporary

Christians are caught between a faith tradition that they feel has preached a gospel of selflessness and a surrounding culture that encourages "self-actualization" as the path to wholeness. Self-denial, however, really has to do with depriving the ego, in order to keep it from exercising a tyranny over the self.

The self is more comprehensive than the ego and includes more than the observable aspects of our personality. The concept represents the unity of our personal identity and our transcendent reality, born of the union with God that exists at the heart of our psyche.

The ego is only an aspect of the self. It offers identity in a functional sense, establishing our place in the world. Unfortunately, the ego tends to regard itself as the center of the universe and strives to maintain stability and control. It seeks the status quo and resists those changes that are the catalysts of human growth.

Many of us confuse ego and self in much the same way we confuse the words sign and symbol in talking about the sacraments. A sign is an indicator that simply points to something else, and in the same way, the ego is one of the more observable dimensions of the self. But a symbol is something much deeper; we say theologically that it makes present the transcendent reality it represents. In the same way, the self bears its transcendent reality as well as its observable behaviors in a deeply sacramental way; because of this, it has the capacity for experiencing the God to whom it is related and of bearing that God into the world.

THE BEHAVING SELF

The ego is most manifest in a person's outer psychic shell, in what we might call the behaving self. This aspect of the personality is the seat of what we do. It is assertive, directive, and in the Jungian sense, "masculine." It is extraverted, and its processes of coping with problems are linear, detail-oriented, and analytical. Functionally, it is the part of the self that adapts to the external environment.

Many people react to change solely on the level of the behaving self. These individuals choose to resist crisis and the accompanying feelings of alienation it engenders. They avoid or distract themselves from the reality announced by the crisis, and they allow the ego full reign over the self. The ego, with its controlling function, thus creates an environment in which the life event cannot have its transforming effect. The ego interrupts the cycle of change so that no real transcendence occurs.

THE OBSERVING SELF

Those of us who wish to grow through our life experiences must develop a perspective that allows us to look not only at the external world but at our own behavior in it. It is this perspective, lying behind

A person in touch with this observing dimension is able to transcend the knee-jerk reactions of the behaving self

the emotional barriers erected by the ego, that allows insight and change. The observing self foresees the need to correct personal deficiencies. This involves the very special human ability of self-reflection. Through it we are able to gain a detached, objective view of our own behavior. Even while we behave, a part of us can disassociate, that is, take a higher vantage point and observe.

Jung says we are all both mountain and valley, both subject and object. Part of us stands above the pain we feel. But, it is difficult to switch to the observing mode because most of our awareness on the conscious level focuses on behavior. Much of the work of psychotherapy is aimed at enabling the client to make this shift rather than be swept along by surface events and behaviors.

In contrast with the behavioral mode, which is more functional and task-oriented, when we employ the observing aspect of the self, we adopt a more receptive, introverted, and responsive stance regarding external events and promptings from deeper within ourselves. We uncover the capacity for listening, for focusing on the present moment rather than fleeing into the past or longing for the future.

A person in touch with this observing dimension is able to transcend the knee-jerk reactions of the behaving self. The observing self recognizes that there is more to the life of the self than the immediate experience of alienation accompanying a crisis. The person experiences a shift from the more masculine, directing function to the more feminine, receptive aspect of the self.

The emergence of the feminine within the self carries with it a willingness to give space and time to

the passage through the cycle of change. For as crisis carries with it the experience of pain and alienation, so it requires time for these feelings to be integrated and transformed, thus enabling human growth. Part of self-reflection involves *thinking through* a situation or behavior. But there is a place beyond the analytic, particularly in complex situations, where the capacity to stay with, to let be, to suffer through a crisis, is equally important, and this comes closer to what we associate with the feminine.

Many of us might never discover this rich resource within our psyches if crisis did not reveal it. Often, it is the enormity of a life crisis that moves us beyond our impulse just to control it and make sense of it. Our familiar supports are removed, and we find ourselves adrift, with no remaining options other than to allow ourselves to be carried into what Karl Rahner calls the “sea of mystery.” This shift, this willingness to encounter unknown territory within the self, to listen and follow with an open heart, makes possible the experience of God. For we meet God on the level of heart, not reason.

It is only faith that allows the journey into the deeper self. Faith implies trust in someone or something larger than ourselves. A religious tradition always carries a paradigmatic story in which hope can reside and which allows us to live occasionally with uncertainty. For the Christian it is the story of Jesus, which dares us to trust that in our experience of darkness, God is near.

THE UNIFYING SELF

When we speak of religious faith, we enter an area of the psyche that lies beyond the scope of scientific psychology. But this only points to the need for an interplay between psychology and spiritual theology. Each requires the other to come to a full understanding of the self. When we move into these farther regions of the self, we rely less on theory and rational constructs and more on the stories of travelers who have journeyed there. Some describe long periods of dryness or darkness, experienced more as absence than presence—a desert of the heart. God does not seem near at such times, and it is only Jesus’ message of the Father’s love that allows the journey to continue. Not feeling that love, they choose to believe that it is still present.

There comes a moment, for those who remain deeply present to their experience, when they are able to transcend its particularity and experience it in a larger and radically new context. The story of Jesus, which has carried them this far, leads them into a moment where they live out the same story themselves. They begin to understand the commonality between the death and resurrection of this one man and the dynamic of death and rebirth recurring in their own lives.

In the stories we hear from individuals at this juncture in their passage, we note a radical shift in

the imagery they use to describe God. The God of power and wisdom, the Father who solves our problems, is now also experienced as a God who deeply anguishes with them in the truest meaning of compassion. In speaking of a God of weakness and suffering, they are giving witness to an aspect of God that they have experienced. They suggest to us a new definition of power, deeply embedded in paradox, but apparently accessible to these “ordinary” people in the course of their interior journeys.

What we hear in these accounts corresponds in some ways to what James Fowler calls “conjunctive faith,” a capacity to unify paradox and contradiction, not by rejecting one or the other, but by allowing each its appropriate place within the self. It is found in individuals who are able to reappropriate their religious myths, symbols, and mysteries and who are able to be nurtured and enlivened by these, because these persons have had a depth experience of their underlying truth.

Such persons experience the “unifying self.” They grasp a sense of their essential relatedness to the transcendent God, whose being is itself a paradox. Ours is a God who, as Rahner has described, is totally other and yet simultaneously intimately related to us. Not many complete the journey into this deepest region of the self or have a true mystical experience of God. But for all who are willing to travel this far, it is possible to uncover a glimmer of that fundamental unity with God out of which we were all created and which preceded our sinfulness. The human being is somehow lost in Paradise, and spiritual progress is a quest to regain our relatedness to God, our place and home with God.

The mystery of healing occurs here, within the unifying self. This is the place of modern miracles, where the deepest experience of God’s healing and unifying power happens. For the Christian, the person of Jesus is the most encompassing symbol of this reality. It is here that the pain of alienation that characterizes the crisis phase is resolved. For many persons this healing involves a journey into memory, a rediscovery of a completeness that, once found, seems always to have existed.

POWER OF SELF-CREATION

In the unifying self, we uncover our capacity for self-creation. The goal of self-discovery is not merely deeper insight into the mystery of the self, or even the personal experience of God, realized for its own sake. Rather, the encounter with that essential relatedness to God at the heart of the self, by its very life-giving dynamism, transforms all the dimensions of the self, so that all become a source of self-creation. The individual arrives at a place of self-acceptance where the paradoxes of the inner landscape are allowed their places alongside one another. What once seemed our darker regions, having been brought into the light, are enlivened and transformed

The self is a new frontier, just as surely as the sea and the stars are for other voyagers

by that light. A person's life process can coexist with perfection.

As we listen to the experiences of those who have touched this unifying dimension within the self, two themes emerge. The first is that individuals who respond to their life situations from this perspective do so in a *holistic* way. They make choices that are life-giving, both for themselves and for others, and that lead to a greater dignity and enhanced sense of self-worth. They have reached a centered position, not to be confused with an egotistical one, which allows them to make authentic choices from the total self rather than to react to their crises merely on the level of ego. The second theme is that some who have reached the unifying aspect of themselves are led by the experience of this deeply God-related di-

mension to share it with others and to bear it into the world. They emerge from their interior journey with a generative impulse, a call to service, a need to bring God's reign into the world.

SELF NEW FRONTIER

Persons who operate totally from an ego-centered position in the behaving self never really complete the cycle of change. They never transcend the crisis, and their choices remain no more than defensive reactions. But those who reach even the level of the observing self, having developed a capacity for self-reflection, can make creative life choices that lead to a deeper self-understanding. The series of choices emerging from continuing reflection on life crises and transitions, when approached with openness and faith, will lead eventually into that deep and unifying heart of the self.

The evolution of human consciousness has produced a capacity for greater self-awareness. At the same time, the empty materialism of contemporary culture has created a hunger for a spiritual center. These two emerging realities provide the necessary vehicles for exploring the inner dimension. The self is a new frontier, just as surely as the sea and the stars are for other voyagers. Anyone can embark on a voyage of self-discovery, but it is persons of faith who are reporting deeper and more transforming journeys.

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TWO GENERATIONS OF ALCOHOLIC PRIESTS

MICHAEL R. PETERSON, M.D., and GABRIELLE L. JEAN, S.C.O., Ph.D.

The Second Vatican Council took place against a background of vast social and political change, unrest, and revolutionary movements. In its struggle to cope with the turmoil that prevailed at the time, the Council helped the church to redefine herself in terms of the People of God and not just of hierarchy. It also used the insights of sociology and psychology to fashion new directives for the formation of priests and religious as well as for dealing with contemporary social and moral issues. The church found herself swept up in the current of social-cultural conflict as she moved toward a new understanding of her identity.

The study we want to report in this article was designed to examine how two generations of alcoholic clergy (separated by Vatican II) differ in terms of personality factors. It was hypothesized that the older generation would reflect the *goal orientation* of the "survival society," whereas the younger generation would reveal the *role orientation* of the "identity society." Both of these concepts were examined by William Glasser, in 1972, in his popular book *The Identity Society*.

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Two samples of fifty alcoholic Catholic priests were randomly selected from a pool of 500 clients who sought residential treatment of their chemical de-

pendency. The first sample consisted of religious and diocesan priests aged 50 or over; the other comprised ordained men aged 45 or younger. The 46-to-49 age bracket was dropped in order to avoid inclusion of priests who were in seminary training while Vatican II was unfolding. This sampling method sought to segregate two distinct generations of Catholic clergy.

The two groups were compared on the basis of family history of mental disorders, age at first intoxication, whether or not they had sought previous psychotherapy, and all the scales of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI).

Comparison of the two generations of clergy relative to the incidence of affective mental disorders in their family history yielded the following information: of the fifty alcoholic priests over age 50, there was alcoholism in the family of thirty-five priests and a history of affective disorders in fourteen. Of the fifty alcoholic priests under age 45, there was alcoholism in the family of forty priests and a history of affective disorders in nine (see Table I). The two generations are comparable with only chance differences emerging in terms of psychiatric history in the clergymen's families.

Table II shows how the two generations of alcoholic priests compare with respect to seeking help for their psychological and/or addictive problems. More of the younger generation of priests sought help in the form of psychotherapy than did their older

counterparts; the difference cannot be accounted for by chance.

When the two groups are compared with respect to age at first intoxication, our finding is that the younger group of priests began drinking heavily at a much earlier age—about age 21, compared with age 28 in the older group. The former were among the generation of the sixties when protest was the order of the day.

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) is a self-report instrument made up of three validity scales and ten pathological or clinical scales. The validity scales are of great importance for the proper interpretation and reliability of the results, on which therapy is to be based. We found that the lie (L), validity (F), and defensiveness (K) scales of the MMPI failed to differentiate between the two generations of alcoholic priests.

In analyzing the performance of the two groups of alcoholic priests on the clinical scales of the MMPI, generational differences emerged on three scales: hysteria, psychopathic deviance, and masculinity-femininity. The first of these scales (Hy) measures the degree to which these men have developed conversion-type symptoms, i.e., expressing their psychological problems in bodily symptoms. The younger group of alcoholic priests is significantly more prone to hysterical conversion symptoms than are the older men. These symptoms are likely to appear when the men are under stress. As psychologists S. Hathaway and J. McKinley have reported in their *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Manual*, hysterical men are more immature psychologically than any other group of men; constant fears and phobias are common in these cases.

The second scale (Pd) measures the degree of sim-

ilarity of these alcoholic priests to a group of people (psychopathic deviants) whose main difficulty lies in their absence of deep emotional response, their inability to profit from experience, and their disregard for social mores. These individuals are commonly likable and intelligent. Their more frequent digressions from the social mores are lying, stealing, alcohol or drug addiction, and sexual immorality. They differ from criminal types in their inability to profit from experience; they seem to commit antisocial acts with little thought of possible gain to themselves or of avoiding discovery.

The high scores of the younger group of alcoholic priests on the sexual-interest scale (Mf) indicate a deviation from the normal basic pattern of interest in the opposite sex. Males with high Mf scores have frequently been found to be either overt or repressed sexual inverters. Homosexual abnormality, however, is not always present in these high scorers, although sexual misconduct is often confirmed.

The other clinical scales did not reveal statistical differences between the older and younger generations of alcoholic Catholic priests.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In our study, we found that the younger clergymen began heavy drinking at a much earlier age than their older colleagues did and that they more readily sought psychological help for their problems. When viewed in terms of the social-cultural context, the findings are not surprising.

Glasser has masterfully delineated the "identity society" of the postwar period. Over the last centuries, civilized "survival man" has spent most of his effort securing a place for himself in society's power structure (goal orientation). The new identity society of the Western world began a rapid, turmoil-filled evolution toward a new role-dominated society led by those born after 1940. Family harmony was shattered when the parents' goal orientation clashed with the role orientation of their sons and daughters. The gap widened as the culture shifted further into the identity society. Many youngsters who could not achieve involvement in social causes outside the family turned to drugs. Among the more publicized members of the new identity society were the hipies, the demonstrators, and the social dropouts.

The traditional sex roles of dominant male and submissive female were challenged in the identity society. The need for a good sex life was more accepted by them than by the survival society. Lonely people were known to be urgently and continually attracted to sex because it seemed to be a simple solution to the problem of loneliness. Therefore, a premium was placed on good sexual involvement.

Affluence, political enlightenment, and the mass media, especially television, have constituted the building blocks of the identity society. Formerly, economic stress governed people's lives; work was

TABLE I
MENTAL DISORDERS IN FAMILIES BY AGE GROUP

| Alcoholic Priests | Over age 50 | Under age 45 |
|-------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Alcoholism in family | 35 | 40 |
| Affective disorders in family | 14 | 9 |

TABLE II
PREVIOUS PSYCHOTHERAPY BY AGE GROUP

| Previous Psychotherapy | Priests over age 50 | Priests under age 45 |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Yes | 20 | 33 |
| No | 30 | 17 |

a means to security and a place in the power structure. Now, for the role-oriented generation, work is not necessarily sacred; many deem it inhuman and degrading. They deny the value of any goal that does not reinforce their humanity.

The protests of the 1960s were a manifestation of the cultural gap. The younger generation of priests grew up in this identity society fully exposed to its value system.

MMPI A DATED INSTRUMENT

It is important to remember that the personality inventory used in this study emerged from the survival society; its diagnostic categories predated the first effort of the American Psychiatric Association to establish a standard nomenclature for mental disorders. Although the MMPI was considered a well-validated inventory at the time of its publication in 1951, it now reflects a cultural lag. The descriptive refinements of the 1980 DSM-III (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*) are missing. The DSM-III did away with the castigating label of "psychopathic deviance," which lumped together a myriad of symptoms and behaviors, and replaced it by such terms as "antisocial," "histrionic," and "narcissistic" personalities. Caution is in order, then, in interpreting the MMPI findings reported above.

The current alternative term for "psychopath" is "antisocial personality," or "sociopath," which has fewer misleading connotations than the earlier term and seems to place the emphasis where it belongs. The sociopath, or person with an antisocial personality, is a problem for others before he is a problem for himself. Outstanding characteristics of sociopaths include the inability to tolerate constraints, such as a regular job, or responsibility in any assignment. They may become skid row alcoholics, severely hypochondriacal, or depressed. They are capable of manipulating, exploiting, and controlling others by intimidation or deception. They are habitual and often extraordinarily convincing liars, experts at mimicking sincerity. The manipulative deception is a means of self-aggrandizement. Anything less than instant success and a starring role is intolerable for them. They have no principled objections to authority; as long as the social system does not interfere with them they are happy to use it for their own advantage. Their emotional life is shallow; they seem almost incapable of loyalty, shame, guilt, love, or other deep feelings. Their sexual partners are not lovers but objects of conquest that is achieved by seduction or assault. Their underdeveloped conscience makes it virtually impossible for them to imagine themselves in another person's place. They can tell right from wrong and can often discuss moral issues intelligently; the trouble is that they do not think the rules apply to them.

Many sociopaths drink heavily and most experiment with illicit drugs; a large number become al-

The younger group of alcoholic priests is significantly more prone to hysterical conversion symptoms than are the older men

coholics or heroin addicts. Since they have few internal constraints, antisocial personalities take little responsibility for their acts and feel no genuine regret; they fail to learn from what other people would regard as disastrous episodes involving drugs and alcohol. At the same time, they know they can implicate drugs and alcohol to exonerate themselves, e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous can be used as a stage for playing the role of repentant sinner.

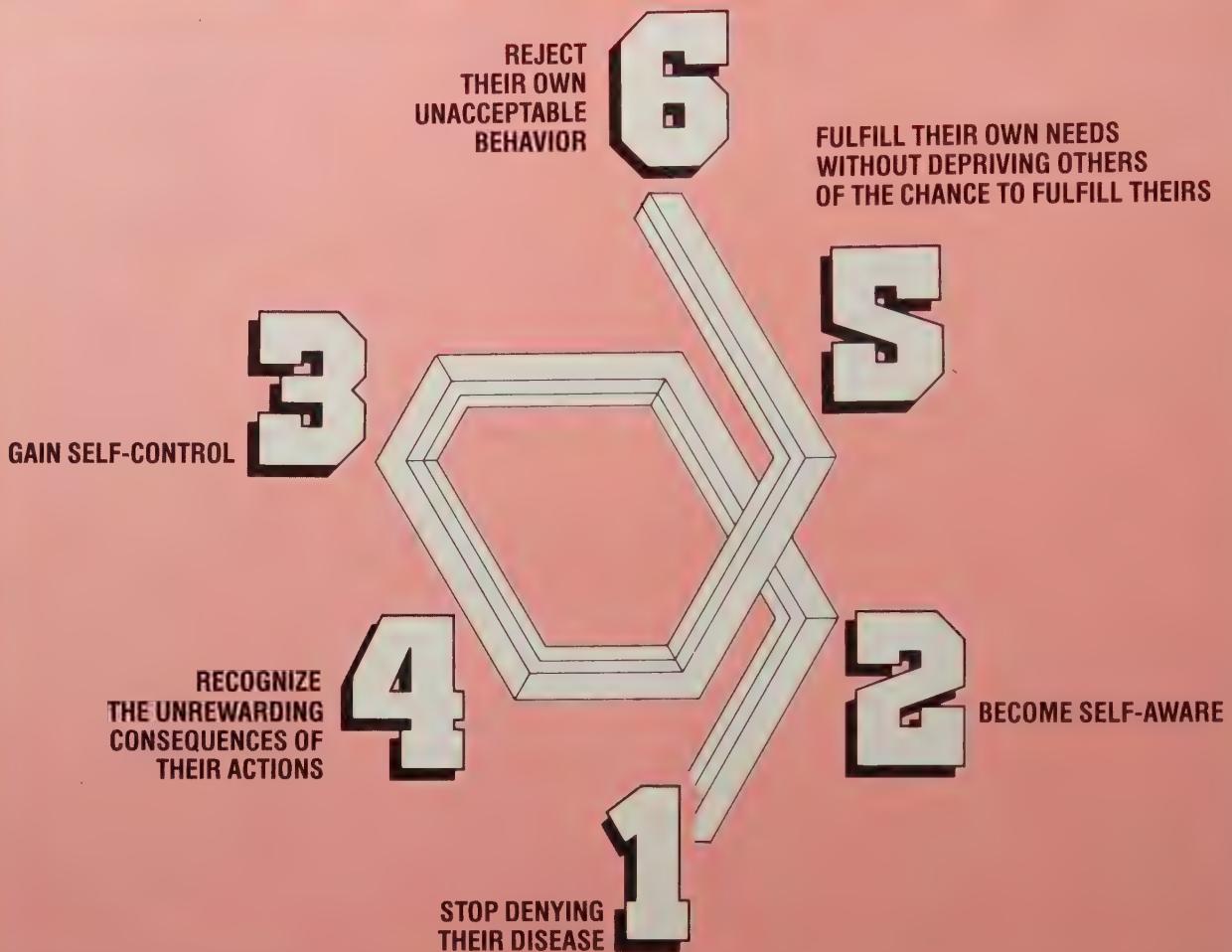
Before making a diagnosis of sociopathy, epilepsy of the temporal lobe of the brain must first be ruled out, since this disease results in a malfunction of the inhibitory mechanisms of the central nervous system, rendering the patient incapable of controlling his behavior adequately. Then one can look at the clinical scales for other possible diagnoses; a young clergyman scoring relatively high on the MMPI's Pd scale would likely present the milder version of the antisocial personality. His most striking presenting symptom would be irresponsibility; the "underdeveloped conscience" concept does not seem to be applicable, although it is obvious that the rules of morality are not given consideration in relation to the self.

Manipulation of others and lying are characteristic of alcoholics; as psychiatrist-researcher George Vaillant has explained, their personality may be the result rather than the cause of their dependence on alcohol. Unresolved intimacy issues are clearly evident in these alcoholic men who have pledged themselves to a celibate life.

TREATMENT OF ALCOHOLICS

Alcoholics are notorious for their denial of the disease and their disruptive, irresponsible behavior. Antisocial personalities do not ordinarily seek psy-

PATIENTS' GOALS IN REALITY THERAPY



chological help; when they do end up in therapy, it is generally under coercion, and then they are not interested in changing at all. They would like to be free to do what they want. The status of patient is distasteful to these sociopaths, who see themselves placed in a position of inferiority; they will do their utmost to reverse this situation by creating their own peculiar version of a therapeutic alliance. Some exercise of authority is necessary. Limits have to be set on the behavior of these patients; they need external controls if they are to develop internal controls. Reality Therapy, as described by William Glasser, offers a promising approach to this type of personality disorder.

A basic concept of Reality Therapy is "responsibility," which is defined as the ability to fulfill one's

needs coupled with acting in a way that does not deprive others of the chance to fulfill theirs. Treatment can aim at making patients a little more self-aware and self-controlled. They have to be helped to think through the consequences of their actions and shown that these are not rewarding. Responsibility is learned through involvement with responsible fellow human beings. In a treatment center, this entails three intimately interwoven procedures: the therapist becomes so involved with the patient that the patient begins to face reality and discover how his behavior is unrealistic; while rejecting the unacceptable behavior, the therapist still accepts the patient and maintains involvement with him. The therapist then teaches the patient better ways of fulfilling his needs within the confines of reality.

Since involvement is synonymous with love in the identity society, the process just described will be more palatable to the client than other approaches will be. Its guiding principles are directed toward achieving the proper type and degree of involvement, which will bring about a completely honest, human relationship in which the patient, perhaps for the first time in his life, will realize that someone cares enough to accept him and to help him fulfill his needs in the real world.

MORE CLERGY NEED HELP

Generational differences among clergymen have always existed, but the cultural changes of the last forty years have modified personal priorities; the earlier goal-orientation prompted by a concern about economic survival has been giving way to the role-orientation of the "I've Gotta Be Me" society. Priests born after 1940 have unconsciously accepted the new "role values" as the only valid ones. Their identification with social issues has led to worthwhile changes in the area of civil and human rights; however, many have pushed the quest for personal freedom beyond the bounds of responsible adulthood. Chemical dependency has increased in the general population, and the antisocial personality syndrome has gained prevalence, even among clergy.

Caution is in order, however, when the diagnosis of this syndrome is made on the basis of a single personality test, especially if the instrument used (e.g., the MMPI) has outlived its usefulness. More sophisticated personality inventories developed within our current sociological context are now commercially available. Not only do these reflect the new nomenclature of the DSM-III but they differentiate among disorders more clearly and give consideration to the severity of the personality dysfunction. The task of therapists is always facilitated by an accurate diagnosis and clarity with regard to the severity of the patient's disorder.

The younger clergymen began heavy drinking at a much earlier age than their older colleagues did

Clergymen share the human predicament with other mortals; their vowed celibate life of service within the church does not grant immunity from human foibles. Psychological help is available for them as for others. They should be encouraged to seek help when needed in order to live a personally satisfying life, which requires *healthy* involvement with the People of God.

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QUIET POLARIZATION ENDANGERING THE C·H·U·R·C·H

Need for Bridge Builders is Urgent

GEORGE A. ASCHENBRENNER, S.J., S.T.D.

Quiet polarization can be much more insidious than a vociferously expressed polarization. And there are clear signs, it seems to me, of a very real, if quiet, polarization still alive in our midst as we move into the second half of the 1980s. Though this subtle polarization is present in secular society also, our chief interest here is in its existence within the church. Through the last half of the 1960s and the early part of the 1970s, the tone of angry public criticism betrayed a vociferous polarization on many levels of church life: international, national, diocesan, and parochial. Now, in the mideighties, though the vociferous quality has died down considerably and the anger is usually not nearly so public and aggressive, I wonder whether a type of passive-aggressive indifference to the opinions of others and a tenacious closedness and settledness about one's own opinions might not testify to a polarization still angrily, though quietly, present among us.

Right now, in some parts of the world, e.g., the United States, the tone of this polarization is becoming less quiet and more public and pronounced, especially with regard to certain incendiary issues burning among us. But this escalation of noise and public demonstration is simply making obvious the quiet polarization that has been present among us in the church, even though it might often have been overlooked or deceptively misunderstood. Through the late seventies and early eighties, a growing quiet might have suggested that we had come to a greater unity. When churning surface waters calm down, people tend to presume that all is well. But it seems to me that deep beneath that quiet surface there were currents capable of becoming treacherous rapids rather than fusing into the strong rush of water that

gives a river simple, uninhibited power and clear direction. As mentioned above, some of these hidden rapids are now beginning to churn apparently placid surface waters again. And so, what is needed is the ability to recognize and deal with polarization not only when it is loud and obvious but also when it is quiet and deceptive. A quiet polarization, precisely because it can be so subtle as to be overlooked, is often more dangerous than the vociferous variety.

Quiet polarization can raise an even more serious danger. When not carefully and honestly perceived, it can be deceptively interpreted as a genuine *pluralism*—a word used here to mean something good and healthy that involves multiple forms of the one faith, different theologies, perhaps even notably different ones, but always expressive of the one faith. This is the pluralism that the spirit of Vatican II celebrated and encouraged in the church. In actuality, however, quiet polarization is merely a tolerance of *plurality*—a term for something unhealthy, describing a very different state of affairs and relationships from that of the genuine pluralism in theologies and other forms of the one faith. In fact, a mere tolerance of plurality, as we will see later, is not only unhealthy but destructive of the unity of any group. When we are sensitive to this crucial distinction between a lazy tolerance of mere plurality and a genuine pluralism in faith, then that claim that often settled disputes in the wake of confusion following Vatican II—"we must agree to disagree"—can become rather unsettling. When quiet polarization is mistaken for a genuine pluralism in faith, it poses its most serious danger for the church.

I will first present some evidence of this quiet polarization and then will describe the type of overly

ideological mentality from which polarization usually springs. After some comments on the meaning of genuine pluralism, I will describe a bridge-building ministry, a contemporary prophetic ministry, urgently needed today at all levels of the church.

SIGNS OF POLARIZATION

Let us consider some of the evidence in the church of a state of affairs that I am describing as quiet polarization. The church can be viewed today in different ways by different groups of believers. For some, the church is primarily an institutional, juridical, hierarchically authoritarian reality in which a concern for "law and order" puts a definite primacy on Canon Law. For others, the church is primarily a charismatic, spiritual, participatory democratic reality in which the spirit and authority of an individual's inviolable conscience gets priority over Canon Law. Within the church there is a variety of opinions about the influence of faith and morality on the practice of human sexuality. The views can range from a long list of detailed, scrupulously followed dos and don'ts, to a comfortable decision to live one's sexuality in a way that seems sensible and healthy to oneself, to an angry disagreement with magisterial moral sexual teachings. And regarding the church's magisterium, there are those who limit it sharply to the authority of Pope and bishops, whereas others are very concerned with acknowledging a kind of magisterial authority for theologians. And the most serious aspect of the situation is not simply the variety of opinions, which seem at times to verge on contradiction, but that these different groups do not often seriously engage in dialogue. Rather, each goes its own way with a sense of closedness and almost apodictic self-justification.

In other areas, also, the quiet settledness of opinion divides rather than moves to dialogue. Some people seem to view liturgy as rubrics and ritual scrupulously adhered to, whereas for others, liturgy seems to be the self-expression of a religious experience dramatically staged without much respect and concern for the minutiae of norms and rubrics. The universal priesthood of all the faithful and the ministerial priesthood of those specially called are not easily integrated. Some attribute such importance to the universal priesthood that the ministerial priesthood all but disappears. But others so prioritize the ministerial priesthood that it prevents the realization of the priesthood of all the faithful, which it should be serving. Some view the church, often unconsciously, with a profoundly patriarchal assumption, which is false to the Revelation when it is carefully understood within its own cultural context; of course, this enrages others whose radical feminism at times seems difficult to reconcile with genuine Christianity. And many of us know the feelings on both sides of the issues of a married priesthood and the ordination of women, feelings sometimes explo-

sive but, more frequently, quietly determined and settled. For some, the gospel of social, systemic justice and liberation becomes so dominating that the gospel of individual, personal conversion and virtue gets overlooked, whereas others have such a narrow fixation with individual conversion that concern for international, global justice and unity is lacking. Once again, the problem is that these groups go their diverse ways on each issue. At least implicitly, they agree to disagree, but each feels that he or she is right, and neither is eager for the patient dialogue that could bring about a more integrated understanding of some aspect of faith and a more profound and pervasive unity within the church.

RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS AFFECTED

Tensions of polarization are also manifest in the understanding and practice of religious life. The following issues can cause tensions and division between different congregations within a diocese, between rival groups within the same congregation or within the same local religious community, and even between religious and diocesan priests in a parish: whether religious authority is vested in a specific person (superior) or not; whether governmental structure is fully participative and decentralized or hierarchically centralized; whether religious life is essentially corporate life in community, where living alone is a rare ministerial necessity, or whether religious life is a loose networking of individuals and groups that form and live pretty much on their own; whether religious should wear a religious habit or not; whether a religious congregation gives priority, time, and energy to serious contemplation in solitude or whether it gives priority to social activism and political confrontation. These issues, and many others at this time, quietly divide and polarize religious life in the church. Religious often find themselves almost helplessly trapped in the cross fire of these tensions and polarizations. And in the strain of such a situation, the temptation to escape into a lazy tolerance of sheer plurality could seem an attractive choice for survival. But genuine survival and healthy development for the future of religious life and the church demand a serious, careful, unprejudiced dialogue that can patiently and gracefully build bridges and achieve a genuine pluralism deeply rooted in a shared profession of belief in God's reconciling and enlivening love.

My concern here is not to resolve these tangled issues. They are presented as evidence of a quiet polarization among us in the church at this time. The actual resolution of these issues usually results from creative new insights, the acknowledgment of new meanings for terms, and other breakthroughs that do not disrupt the continuity of the tradition but rather allow that tradition to develop in a lively, fresh, contemporary expression. But such a resolution is not divinely decreed from on high. It requires

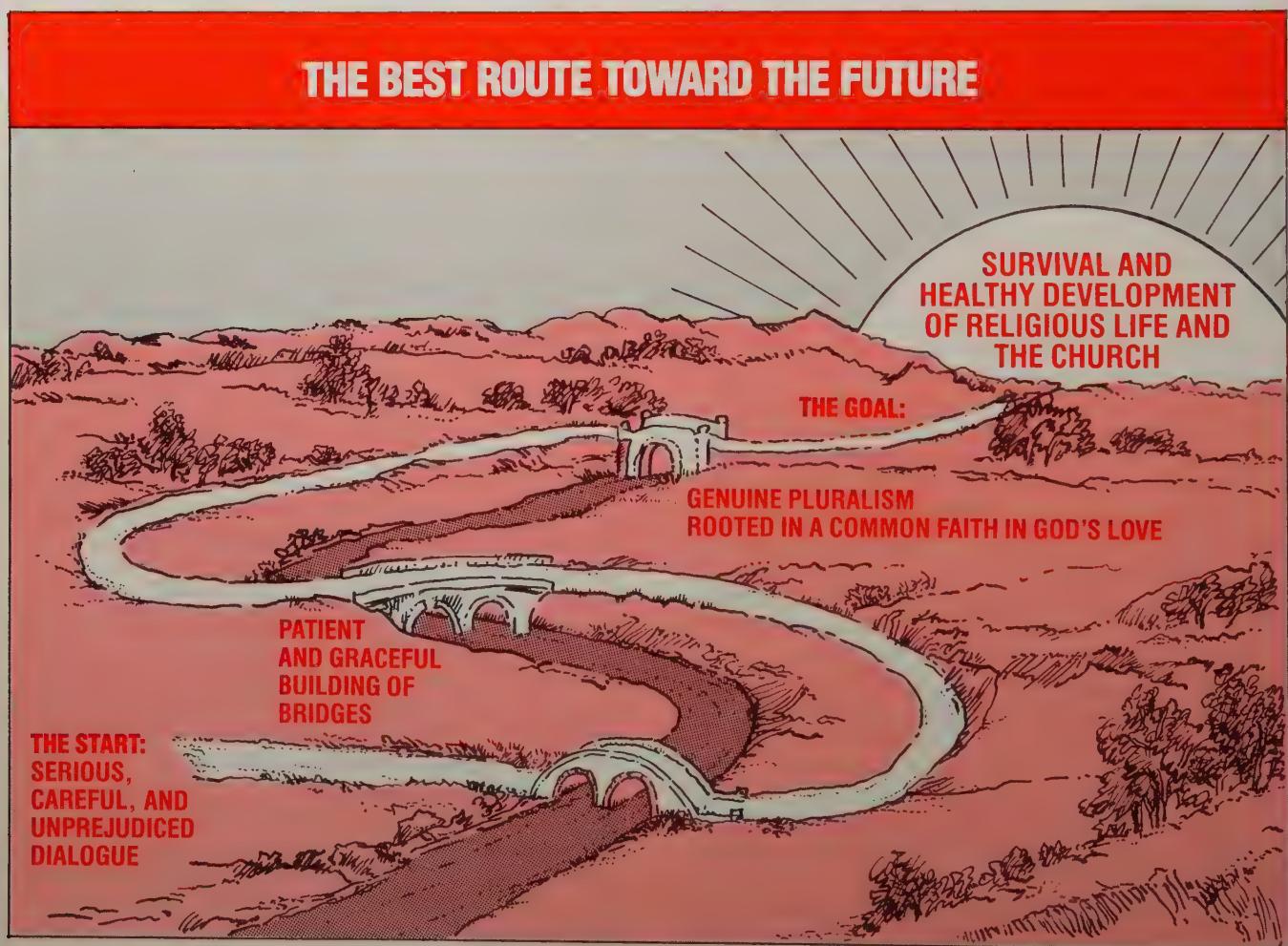
much serious pondering and prayerful dialogue on the part of us all if we are to receive the enlightening and reconciling clarity of the Holy Spirit. And so, once again, the precise problem with quiet polarization is an often unconscious but tenaciously grasped apodictic attitude, a quiet, closed settledness of mind and heart that steadily isolates one opinion from another, rather than carefully and creatively integrating them. What causes such a polarizing attitude among us? And what mission can the acknowledgement of it impose on us?

OVERLY IDEOLOGICAL THINKING

Though there are surely other factors involved, a central cause of quiet polarization is a strong, unconscious tendency in most of us toward a type of overly ideological thinking. In the period of the Enlightenment and in the view of Marxism, the word *ideological* has a technical meaning. I am giving it a more simple, less technical significance here, however. Thinking in an overly ideological fashion is thinking in too narrow, too closed and doctrinaire

a fashion. A bumper sticker I once saw made the point sharply: "Minds, like parachutes, only function when open." But the overly ideological mind is not open. This is not an attitude someone explicitly chooses, but an unconscious dynamic that can take over in the thinking of most of us, especially when we are rabidly involved with a certain opinion or belief. And this type of narrow thinking can happen as much to the liberal as to the conservative. I offer here a list of eight signs, eight examples, of this ideological thinking, which may serve as a mini-examen for all of us.

1. We listen with our heart weighted toward a personal need-to-be-declared-right over our rival rather than toward a desire to be reverent in our discussion with the other person. The personal reverence that should characterize any human dialogue, then, is lacking here. Rather, a competitive urgency to be acclaimed the winner is what drives us on in the discussion. In this excessive debating mentality, every encounter becomes a struggle to be right, to win, to prevail.



And yet, though being proven right without having been reverent to the other is not worthy of human dialogue, on the other hand, we obviously must not so overstress the role of reverence that it becomes completely disconnected from what is right and true.

2. We listen in such a way, at times quite carefully, but chiefly just waiting, that we can show not only that the other person is wrong but also why and how. This can be a “defender of the faith” mentality working overtime in everything. There is a constant urgency to defend our own position by showing the other person’s opinion to be wrong. When caught in this mentality, our apparently careful listening is not really aimed at acknowledging and learning something good and new from the other. And there is very little, if any, struggle to overcome a quick prejudicial dislike of what we have first heard.
3. We listen so as to judge people simply according to their ideas and opinions, without much regard for the whole person. In this mentality, we encounter others mind-to-mind, without much involvement of the heart. This type of encounter can be described as “professional,” in that we screen out any deeply personal aspects of other people with whom we dialogue—for example, their fears, sufferings, joys, and hopes. My point here is not to promote a kind of sentimental, mushy thinking that does not respect serious, clear, professional research and criticism. Rather, my claim is that ideological thinking usually disregards the concrete daily life of another human being as the necessary context for dialogue about ideas, opinions, and beliefs.
4. We think with such a rigidity that our positions have not developed over the years and have become boringly and predictably the same. We can get locked into one way of thinking, so that we do not seriously read or ponder other sides of an issue. It would not be too difficult to draw up a list of concerns in the world and the church that could be branded “liberal” and another, different list that could be branded “conservative.” And the two would not overlap very much. We can write off a book because of reputation and hearsay, before reading it or consulting serious reviews of it. Sometimes this mentality is revealed in our stubborn clinging to certain positions as though they were proof of our very identity.
5. We think and speak in too apodictic and authoritative a way about our ideas. The tone of our voice can bespeak a certitude about the rightness of our own views that seems simply to write off the possibility of the rightness of another person’s ideas. From this aspect, ideological thinking can be insensitive to a profound sense of mystery—mystery about God and about all reality—that is not something that promotes a dark agnosticism, but is a protection against our creating our own

A quiet polarization, precisely because it can be so subtle as to be overlooked, is often more dangerous than the vociferous variety

God or world to fit our prejudices and needs.

6. We relate to others with a poor sense of timing and a lack of patience. Conservatives can insist on thrashing out not only the issue presently under discussion but all of its implications—and they insist it be done *right now*. And liberals can write off conservatives without the patience that is needed for careful listening and discussion.
7. We arrogantly claim to be either conservative or liberal in a way that forewarns others of our stubborn, settled prejudice.
8. We encounter life and other people with a seriousness that betrays the lack of any sense of humor. We become so doggedly attached to our opinions that healthy laughter at ourselves, at life, and even at our own opinions becomes all but impossible. But we must remember that this humor, so different from a sneering ridicule, cannot be afforded except by those whose identity resides not in their own opinions and ideas but in their experience of a loving God blessing them with a healthy, humble sense of themselves.

Because the tendency toward an overly ideological mentality like this is in us all, we must strive to be reflective, so that the radar screen of our consciousness examen will be sensitive and register the waves and vibrations of such narrow thinking. As people of faith we must be ready to recognize the Spirit’s calling us away, at times, from some mistaken, selfish stubbornness to a renewed resiliency and openness that will make reconciliation and unity once again possible. Insofar as believers are cooperating with this kind of spiritual conversion in their own hearts, they can render great service in helping one another both to recognize some of these signs of narrow ide-

ology in their own thinking and to abandon themselves to the converting call of God's Spirit inviting a renewed and more profound unity in faith.

PLURALISM IN FAITH

Because, as mentioned above, it can be mistakenly used to justify a quiet polarization, genuine pluralism in theologies and other forms of the one faith must be more carefully investigated. A human pluralism that is healthy and wholesome is never something monotonously monolithic or stringently uniform. I am not calling for such a uniformity in the church as a whole or in any group within the church. But neither is true pluralism a belief in diversity as a good for its own sake. "The more diversity the better" is a saying too carelessly unnuanced. Sheer diversity can be chaotic—and that never glorifies God or edifies the human family. But when the Spirit of God brings from chaos a glorious order of rich variety, then we have cosmos. For us human beings, diversity is perceived as glorifying God when the blessing of an underlying order and unity is not foisted on creation, but discovered and celebrated as the trademark of a loving Creator-God.

True pluralism in the church will always involve, because it must, a profound unity of faith, clearly perceived and shared. Without such unity, rapid diversification can easily become tolerance of mere plurality, at times, perhaps, a plurality of beliefs of such moment and such depth that it defies unity and reconciliation. A largely unspoken polarization at those essential depths where we either are or are not a community, are or are not fundamentally one in Catholic faith, or are or are not one in Christ is always confusing and destructive as much for the church and a diocese as for a nation and human families. John Gardner, in his newly revised edition of *Excellence*, sees such a danger for the United States when he claims that "pluralism is one thing and divisiveness is another. Our divisiveness in this society today approaches incoherence. . . . We must reexamine our shared values and renew them." Without a perceived and shared fundamental unity, human beings cannot find the key of intelligibility that can turn chaos into blessed diversity.

A lazy tolerance of plurality can prevent the patient dialogue and honest investigation needed to discover, develop, and share profound unity in faith. And such dialogue and investigation will surely take the time and patience that is born in the context of love and in the conviction that conflict can be an opportunity for creativity and growth. In some situations of the present conflict and polarization, resolution will come, of course, only by acknowledging one opinion as correct and the other as wrong. But in many other situations, careful dialogue and serious research can invoke the Holy Spirit's creativity in a breakthrough of reconciliation for a deeper, integrating pluralism in faith. Meanwhile, this moment

**"Minds, like parachutes,
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when open"**

in the church confronts us with an important concern: In this time of rapid and recent diversification, how do we learn to live respectfully with one another and work toward an ever deeper unity in faith?

NEED FOR BRIDGE BUILDERS

Because of the present situation of quiet polarization, there is a great need for bridge builders at all levels of church life. When so many people have become encamped on one side or the other, bridge building becomes an urgent, prophetic service in the church. As mentioned earlier, believers in various situations may be experiencing much of this quiet polarization. And perhaps, when caught in the cross fire, they may have a few fearful moments as they wonder about their own survival and the future of the church and of religious life. I don't want to sound like a prophet of doom. That is not the way I see the situation. But in the midst of much potential and hope for the future development of the church and religious life, we must be realistic about a serious situation among us of quietly polarizing mentalities. Without the ministry of bridge builders promoting honest, reverent dialogue, full hope and potential for the future will not materialize.

I suggest that one of the very great services we can all render now is that of bridge building. No doubt many of us have already found ourselves thrust into this special ministry of reconciliation and peace making. It is a demanding ministry requiring a profound and special spirituality of lively trust in, and familiarity with, Jesus as God's reconciliation with us all. A bridge builder needs more than raw will-power and determination. In most situations, the advice "to shake hands and forget your differences" will not be enough. And it should not be; it is not our deepest truth.

The work of the bridge builder is creative, patient, and very difficult. It is creativity that prevents community from capitulating to the lowest common de-

nominator. In the face of certain impasses, the ingenuity of an engineering feat is called for to bridge the gulf. Bridge building is also messy work; you have to be willing to get dirty. To dive underwater and survey the depths or to lay foundations in muddy ground is never easy. In some few situations, bridge building will even require blasting out rock formations in the honest, loving confrontation of attitudes that must change if new foundations are to be laid.

It is very patient work, work that stretches a person. The bridge builder can never indulge in ideological thinking. One must be able to live on both shores, to recognize the gulf of difference and to have a genuine desire and hope for bridging it. The builder of bridges learns to listen compassionately, though not uncritically, to the good of both sides and does not become trapped on only one side. One must learn to live patiently, though not irresponsibly, with conflict and ambiguity, maintaining a genuine interest in the issues presently in conflict and always believing in, working for, and inviting others to, bonds of unity deeper than the present conflict.

This ministry of bridge building requires that we develop, and therefore live and plainly speak out of, a genuine gospel spirituality beyond any particular political ideology. This is not to deny that we may have a natural preference one way or the other. Nor is it to deny that Christianity has terribly serious implications for the political realm. But it is to maintain that bridge builders must have a faith so profoundly rooted in the intimate absoluteness of God's love that they are not finally limited by natural preferences and can transcend partisan politics and any conservative/liberal split in their service of the church. The fully mature gospel person is neither simply liberal nor simply conservative, but a carefully balanced integration of the two, even though one or the other may be a natural preference. In this time of quiet polarization, it is especially imperative that we develop within our hearts and minds something of God's own imaginative sympathy and openness toward both conservative and liberal tendencies. One without the other will not serve the church now in her struggle to develop a new, deeper unity in faith. The challenge to all of us is to experience God with such a lively profundity that each of us can have the wisdom and freedom needed to recognize those new ways of the Holy Spirit that will not break with the Christian tradition but will conserve it with new vitality and attractiveness for the future.

From the vantage point of this profound gospel spirituality and its clarity about the stark absoluteness of God's love, we realize that the Christian mystery as lived in this world is usually better expressed in the expression *both/and* rather than in the expression *either/or*. And so one comes to realize that the church is, must be, both institutional and charismatic; that priesthood is both for all the faithful and ministerially for those specially chosen; that the gospel is a matter both of systemic, social transfor-

mation and of individual virtue; that a religious governmental structure can be both hierarchical and centralized, and participatory and decentralized; that religious congregations must give priority, time, and energy both to serious contemplation and to social involvement in our world. One alternative without the other is incomplete and makes of the church or a religious congregation a deformed, distorted, and impoverished body.

SPECIFIC RESPONSES NEEDED

In summary, the present situation in the church of a quiet polarization that can at times deceptively pose as a post-Vatican II pluralism calls us to some careful, courageous responses. First, we must learn to recognize these quiet polarizing tendencies at work in our own milieu, whether it be a parish, diocese, or religious congregation or community. Second, in that local situation, each of us must first examine his or her own heart for the signs of ideological thinking and not simply blame others. Third, we need to find our identity more and more in God's steadfast love for us and less and less in prejudices, favorite beliefs, and ideological positions. In this way, a humble honesty can help us to recognize God's forgiving call in the Spirit to a conversion away from a subtle arrogance and rigidity to a deeper reconciliation and unity in the group. Fourth, we will need careful minds professionally trained not only in theology but also in philosophy and other secular disciplines so that we can deal seriously with the intellectual issues that underlie many of the topics presently dividing us. Fifth, we need honest and reverent dialogue, on all levels, about our differences. This dialogue can bring enlightenment and mutual courage for both necessary compromise and necessary conversion so that we can be faithful to that deepening unity and that increasing, genuine pluralism that can bind us together more and more in awe and wonder before a God whose infinitely varied beauty and glory enrich our world in an ever more diversified revelation.

Finally, we need bridge builders of a profound and lively gospel spirituality beyond any political ideologies, whose hearts are regularly experiencing, and are committed to, the absolute foundation of being loved in the God of Jesus. In this way, these people will be insightful enough to recognize the development of a valid pluralism of forms of orthodox faith and not be trapped into any stubborn defense either of unorthodox faith or of dead forms of faith. They will be generously and courageously ready to live and love in a world of an ever greater pluralism that can inspire in human hearts praise, reverence, and adoration before a God so varied and so full of kindness and of love. It is a bold dream, for it is a truth that is also a labor, something to be done, a task before us all. One hears the echo of Augustine: "O Beauty, ever ancient, ever new!"

REASONS FOR DEPARTURE FROM THE NOVITIATE

Reflections on the Young Who Have Recently Left

WILLIAM J. SNECK, S.J., Ph.D.

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times." Thus Charles Dickens begins his *Tale of Two Cities*, and I can think of no better way of capsulizing five years' experience as an associate novice director than to quote him. It was the best of times, because one could almost palpably see and hear the operation of God's grace in the lives of young men discerning their call to serve his people. One could experience their struggles with doubt and challenge, hope and temptation; and their joy in companionship, commitments arrived at, and compassion expressed in ministry. Yet it was the worst of times, too, when the peculiar hothouse atmosphere of a novitiate would occasionally engender claustrophobia, fray nerves, shrink charity, or unduly magnify the implications of offhand comments.

One might imagine that a novice's leaving the community would automatically be classified as one of those "worst of times," but such is not the case. In his *Constitutions*, St. Ignatius of Loyola stresses that the dismissal of a novice should be an occasion of consolation, if possible. I found that it usually was, despite the pain of separation from a young man with whom our community had grown close by the intense sharing a noviceship provides.

Light is shed on the mystery of vocation by the experience of those who hear the call of the Spirit from out of "the world," leave family and career, and embrace the new way of life a religious community offers. A different kind of clarity about this process also emerges through reflection on the journeys of those who leave our ranks even after passing successfully through the rather elaborate screening procedures imposed during the prenovitiate candidacy program. I hope that what follows will assist formation staff, vocation directors, pastoral counselors, and spiritual guides in our joint efforts to increase awareness about how a call unfolds. Although the analysis derives from Jesuit experience, I believe

it can be legitimately extended to describe novices departing from other religious communities, male and female, and from diocesan seminaries.

SEARCHING FOR REASONS

Of the one hundred men I have considered in preparing this analysis, all novices during the past eight years, seventy-seven took vows and twenty-three left the Society of Jesus during the noviceship. Although there may be analogies with the lives of those who leave later (after taking vows), I shall be reviewing the circumstances of only these departing novices.

Ten factors seemed to suggest themselves as I thought about how the men's discernment intersected with guidance from the novitiate staff and novice master. No case is explained, much less explained away, by any single factor. Usually, explanation involves an interaction of at least three of the factors I will point out. A first draft of my study was sent to the twenty-eight experienced novice directors and associates who attend an annual North American Jesuit novice-masters' meeting. They were requested to reply to two questions: (1) Did the ten factors I included reflect your experience with departing novices? (2) Again, from your experience, could you suggest additional reasons why novices leave?

These men conduct novitiates for the ten American Jesuit provinces, and for the English Canadian, French Canadian, Hungarian (housed in Canada), and Puerto Rican novices as well. Of the twenty-eight men polled, eighteen responded; these represent all but one of the American novitiates and three of the four outside the United States, so some cross-cultural validation of the study's results can be inferred. To a man, all generally supported the accuracy of the analysis. Depending on the number of departing novices each had directed, he was able to affirm one or more of the stated factors while offering careful

nuancing from his experience. Two of them supplied new factors that seemed to me to represent categories already offered rather than new dimensions.

Two comments are in order before I list the factors. First: One correspondent wrote: "I believe that there is a danger in thinking that categories will ever be found that somehow cover the subtle nuances of each specific novice and the ingredients of his departure." With that warning I wholeheartedly agree. An alternative approach, however, of presenting a series of disguised case studies was rejected because of potential risks to confidentiality. We are facing here the difficulty of all attempts to describe the human being, which are felt by any writer other than the novelist, biographer, or poet. Admitting that precision is lowered through generalization, I am nevertheless urged on by the unanimous encouragement of my former confreres in the formation apostolate to share these comments.

Second: One additional and obvious factor not proposed by any staff member was offered by a young Jesuit I had worked with (who had taken vows); namely, the novitiate program itself needs revamping, or at least some alterations. Perhaps this truth did not occur to us formators because weekly staff meetings, annual evaluations with the novices themselves, annual week-long national meetings, and close scrutiny by provincial-level directors of formation contributed to our belief that we, for our part, were providing an effective program.

UNDERLYING THE DEPARTURES

What transpires, then, in the minds and hearts of those men who take the big step of leaving their families and entering a novitiate and who then decide to reverse their course? First I want to provide an outline of factors and then comment on each classification. The outline is as follows:

- I. *Descriptive categories* (these are derived phenomenologically from what the novice himself understands and feels)
 - 1. the "Sisyphus factor"
 - 2. zealous Catholic upbringing
 - 3. forced dismissal
- II. *Explanatory categories: causes for unsuitability* (these are often *not* the novice's reason, but a major factor at work anyway)
 - 4. religious "unconversion"
 - 5. youth
 - 6. cultural instability
- III. *Explanatory categories: his reasons for leaving* (these are the novice's own consciously considered purposes or intentions)
 - 7. mature discernment
 - 8. poverty
 - 9. desire for marriage
 - 10. diocesan priesthood

To begin my comments, I believe that the "Descriptive" set of factors would be helpful for an individual novice if he is having trouble. A director could help him articulate the entire symbolic world of the experience as he feels it, much in the manner that some theological reflection techniques help a person become aware of unacknowledged values and fears. Ideally, a novice would be brought through this level to the "Explanatory/Reasons" level.

The "Explanatory/Causes" grouping would be of interest to staffs so that they can ascertain the pressures an individual novice feels and can help him overcome them. Some spiritual directors may be blind to these causes: they might treat a novice's malaise as, for example, a problem with prayer, when in fact it may be cultural, emotional, or deeply religious. Here, too, an attempt should be made to bring a novice through this level of reflection to the "Explanatory/Reasons" level.

The "Explanatory/Reasons" set would be helpful first of all to the novice himself so that he can articulate what he wants or at least what he doesn't want. It would also be helpful when explanations have to be given to outsiders about a novice's leaving.

I. Descriptive Categories. 1. *The "Sisyphus Factor."* In ancient Greek mythology, Sisyphus had the frustrating task of repeatedly rolling a huge stone up a mountainside only to have it roll back down each time he neared the summit. A primary sign that directors look for among novices is peace and joy in their living a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience, together with a deep-down sense of rightness about their choice in entering religious life. Of course, there are difficult days and hard moments, but with most who stay, a joyous sense of fulfillment in making and living their commitment provides confirmation that this is truly what God, the man himself, and the community most deeply desire. Some of the departing novices, however, seemed to suffer from the Sisyphus Factor. These were men who during their time of candidacy and under spiritual direction felt called by God to enter the Jesuits. Yet almost immediately for some, or after several months or years of sincere effort at giving themselves to the program, it became clear to the man and his spiritual directors that he was basically unhappy, out of place, straining too much simply to survive. Heroic sanctity should be the product of vocational choice multiplied by years of peacefully living out a commitment, not a prerequisite for getting up each morning and facing the day. Usually, it becomes clear that the stone is becoming too heavy to push during novitiate, but because Jesuits know that they are preparing to be priests and brothers, not novices forever, some young men induce their mentors to let them continue in the Order. Such dogged souls continue rolling their boulder up the steep incline until an astute spiritual director interprets their need to leave as a choice for life, deflates their guilt feelings regarding the issue of departure, and suggests a more creative

life script than Sisyphus's. One novice master wrote:

A primary reason they left was that they discovered in the novitiate experiments that they were indeed straining too hard to live a life that was not making them happy. With guidance they decided to leave, expressing a sense of relief that has endured. None of them is showing even any initial interest in reentering at a future date.

2. Zealous Catholic upbringing. The men in this group grew up in what might be described as traditional Catholic families, or with a traditional Catholic education, in the sense that each felt that he wanted to give his best to God, and that doing the best meant becoming a priest. The noviceship freed these men from such a bias by showing them that their basic dis-ease with our way of life could be an indication that the Jesuit way might not be the best *for them*. God deals so personally with each man and woman that generosity and love can be expressed in nearly infinite ways. The novitiate became an experience of *permission*, allowing them to discover God's unique invitation to a life of love with all pre-determined "shoulds" removed from their consciences. The new experience of freedom made these departures among the happiest, despite the pain of separation.

Then there are those who left whose vocations were more to please their parents than to please God. This can be a very unconscious motivation but nonetheless a dominant one. One director wrote of a man who stayed almost the full two years in the novitiate but, only after much discernment and a psychological assessment, came to see that he was really trying to please a very demanding parent. He continued:

I know we all want to please our parents, and for most of us entering religious life, we did please them, but I am talking about the extreme cases where the predominant unconscious motivation is for parental approval which has probably always been at least partially withheld.

3. Forced dismissal. The saddest and most difficult departures were those endured by men who were convinced that they should be Jesuits, but about whom we on the novitiate team had become convinced otherwise. These cases cost seemingly endless hours of sometimes tumultuous discussion among ourselves; yet, since a novice director also exercises a gate-keeping function, they had to go. As was noted earlier, St. Ignatius always advised novice directors to attempt helping such novices to leave *consoled*, but this objective is not always attainable. If novitiate service includes "the best of times and the worst of times," surely some of the worst times occurred when a novice couldn't see why we were sending him away, despite our best efforts to explain and clarify the decision. Reasons behind such a conclusion include poor physical health; psychological immaturity and instability that had not surfaced in the prenovitiate psychological examination but had become noticeable under the stresses of communal living; lack of apostolic disponibility and flexibility, e.g., lack of openness to shoulder the varied ministries of the Order or a manifest unwillingness to work in any place but a city close to family and friends.

II. Explanatory Categories: Causes for Unsuitability.
4. Religious "unconversion." This neologism attempts to sum up the strange cases of men who, given the intense life of reflection and study provided by the Society, decided not only to leave the Jesuits but



In his *Constitutions*, St. Ignatius of Loyola stresses that the dismissal of a novice should be an occasion of consolation, if possible

the Catholic Church as well. Being of an intellectual cast of mind, they had thought their way into the Order and thought their way back out again. None are atheists or unchurched, but all have become members of religious groups that provide a more congenial home for their convictions and philosophies than does Roman Catholicism.

Their new religious paths seemed to be basically more attractive, exciting, or challenging than the Catholicism they had known. The new way enlisted the dynamism of these young men. As an explanatory cause, religious "unconversion" would indicate that such novices needed faith growth, Christian growth, or religious growth more than growth in a specifically Jesuit vocation.

5. *Youth.* These days there is discussion in formation circles about the advisability of taking men right out of high school. For example, one director wrote:

I feel that given the maturity of the majority who enter the novitiate, it is very difficult for a young man in his late teens to survive. I know there are arguments for and against our acceptance of high school graduates. Except in very rare circumstances, I would be against acceptance of men of this age group.

Maryland Province may be unusual in the American Society, in that only three of our novices over the last eight years entered at an age of less than twenty years. One remains a Jesuit, and the two who departed did so for other reasons than age or immaturity. Our experience with the "youth factor" is thus statistically insignificant; but our policy is that

young men *can* make the decision to live their lives as Jesuits during high school and *can* grow up happily in the Society. Our consensus suggests, however, that the best "window" for age of entry opens between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-eight. By twenty-one, most men have had some maturing life experiences, and they are still adaptable and receptive to new ways of being at twenty-eight. Although many excellent men in the province started with us at an earlier or later age than that which we are proposing, this fact does not alter our hunch that immaturity or inflexibility makes formation more difficult when it begins before twenty-one or after twenty-eight.

6. *Cultural instability.* I derive this causal hypothesis from John Staudenmaier, a Wisconsin Province Jesuit, who offers an insightful and fascinating workshop titled "Technology and Spirituality." In his presentations, Father Staudenmaier traces the history of the rising impact of technology on American culture and argues that young people growing up today experience transiency, impermanence, and fluidity in artifacts, living space, and relationships. Although novice directors stress the solidity, permanence, and perpetuity of a vowed commitment, young people's contemporary experience does not support this ideal. "Forever and ever" gets emotionally translated into "so long as it lasts."

Men who leave for a "better option" are usually stoically accepted and understood by their peers who themselves may have had little experience, from childhood up, of a stable personal or physical environment. Of all the factors listed, this appears as the most ominous, for it strikes at the apostle's sense that he can count on his fellow Jesuits when the going gets tough—or even, conversely, when more "pleasant options" turn up.

Father Bernard Belair, S.J., a French Canadian psychologist, has suggested another dimension of this factor. He has observed that young people growing up in such unstable environments often suffer shaky self-images; acceptance into a religious community and approval to take vows represent tremendously positive and affirming ego boosts, so only after receiving the supportive go-ahead from the congregation does the young religious at last know real freedom to accept or reject a vocation.

How does the factor of cultural instability operate? Even though a young person can be in his midtwenties and mature in most ways, it can cause difficulty, hesitancy, and even near-paralysis of will as he thinks of making a lifelong commitment in the near future. He can feel this way both about religious vows and about marriage. Living in a culture where permanent commitment is so little valued has a great influence on most novices. One might go so far as to posit that the commitment of permanent vows, whether these be religious or marriage vows, is a countercultural action today.

The issue and the challenge, of course, are how to

guide men coming from such a culture while not too quickly condemning that culture.

III. Explanatory Categories: His Reasons for Leaving.

7. *Mature discernment*. According to our novitiate team's philosophy of formation, the primary goal of the noviceship, vocational discernment, is described as "providing an atmosphere in which a previously made decision to become a Jesuit is lived, tested, and confirmed through mutual discernment with the spiritual director and novice master." (Incidentally, this very basic philosophical tenet explains in part why classes of novices are smaller today than those of yesteryear: entering novices are not just "trying it out" in the novitiate, but come, as St. Ignatius himself directs in his *Constitutions*, with a well-formed desire for our life.) The men under discussion could have become excellent Jesuits, from our point of view, but it became clear after prayer, reflection, discussion, and some of their novitiate experiments that God was calling the men elsewhere. Had they been deceived in the first place in following a supposed call to become a novice? None would say so, because their time in the novitiate has made them better Catholic laymen, more committed to prayer, spiritual life, and apostolic service in the community, and friends for life with a fine group of brothers.

Examples of mature discernment are the following: a man comes to the novitiate with no prior experiential knowledge of just what a Jesuit is. Perhaps he has read about us, heard about us. Spiritual direction and prenovitiate candidacy provide encouraging affirmation. The novitiate shows him what "Jesuit" is, and it turns out not to be what he wants. Or, he finds areas of life he cannot develop fully in the novitiate, for example, more involvement in or experiences of certain life-styles or deeper relationships with women. Too, he may discover that his views, values, and life goals simply will not mesh with our way of living and working. Thus he departs, usually joyfully and gratefully. Ultimately, it is primarily what goes on in the interior of each that indicates whether God is calling a man toward or away from the Society.

8. *Poverty*. In this era when the Society of Jesus is corporately striving to live out a more authentic "option for the poor," the case of these men is instructive. All were drawn especially to the dimension of the vow of poverty in a Jesuit's calling. Yet all walked away from us precisely in order to live a less middle-class life-style. All were disappointed that the documents on poverty read during candidacy were not incarnated to their satisfaction in the communities where they lived and worked. If those forcibly dismissed saddened us, these sobered us. The call of the Spirit reflected in our General Congregations and in the lives of those poor around us is being answered by many individual Jesuits who are known and admired, yet the corporate effect on these novices of our way of living was to persuade them to search

elsewhere for a more austere life-style. It would be interesting to follow up these men to see if they have found what they were looking for.

Always a focus of intense discussion among religious, the poverty issue elicited the following comments from three directors:

Poverty, life-style, and justice issues have for many novices been real stumbling blocks in that we usually fail to live up to the ideals expressed in our documents. This has been a painful reality for these men. Although a few have threatened to leave because of this, no one has actually made the move.

A second director takes the poverty factor to a deeper level of analysis:

My experience is that no one recently has left our novitiate because of disappointment with the way we live poverty, though several expressed such disappointment during the novitiate. While I consider this a valid challenge and one which we ought to heed, I noticed on several occasions that such a crusade for poorer life-styles can camouflage other concerns or unfreedoms which eventually surface.

A third director, independently of the second, provides a parallel viewpoint:

The challenge to the Society is there in youthful idealism and perhaps we *should* meet it. Yet so is the darkness of unreality, immaturity and radical sinfulness. In many cases I've listened to this difficulty about the group's practical inability to live up to its ideal, only to find that it masked other far more important immaturities. Lack of *faith* in the Society is more at stake than disappointment in her ability to be faithful to poverty. Of all your factors I find this one the most challenging and questionable.

9. *Desire for marriage*. The stereotypical ex-seminarian has met a girl and left to marry her. Hence, I place this factor here to acknowledge that a desire for marriage has played a role in the departures of some novices, several of whom did marry a woman whom they had met while in the Society. Yet my deliberately placing this factor later in the list than most others emphasizes that, as with all stereotypes, human motives reveal much more complexity than the common wisdom suggests.

In the happiest of situations, "the best of times," this factor is another concrete instance of factor seven, mature discernment. A man seeks to become "indifferent," i.e., to exercise poised freedom regarding the marriage question. As he seeks to know how the Lord is moving him, it becomes clear through the process of discernment that the Lord is attracting him to marriage. The marriage/celibacy issue remains a major question for a few throughout the whole novitiate. Those who stay come down firmly on the side of religious life, again by using the discernment process.

“Forever and ever” gets emotionally translated into “so long as it lasts”

Getting to know oneself better in the area of sexuality and intimacy while in the safe and supportive atmosphere of the novitiate happens fairly often with our men. Some leave the novitiate after becoming clearer about their identity and their needs. Through months of struggling with the “relationship” question, they discern that they want and need to focus on intimacy in their lives by nourishing such a relationship outside the Society. Others choose to stay, with an incipient ability to integrate their discoveries into their wider personalities and experiences. They do not sense a need to explore their self-understanding through pursuing a one-to-one relationship.

The statistics on the successes and failures of marriage of former religious are only beginning to come in. Once again, the question is whether some deeper factors, such as faith commitment, are at work underlying success or failure in the vocation either to religious life or to marriage.

10. Diocesan priesthood. The poorest predictor for perseverance seems to be entry as a diocesan priest. In my twenty-six years in the Order, all eight (i.e., 100 percent) of the ordained clergy who joined us left later. Most returned to their dioceses, but several left the practice of priesthood as well. Viewed positively, this phenomenon could imply that our formation process helped men discern their true vocation. Viewed negatively, it could be questioned whether we provide a supportive environment for clergymen who discern a call to the Society. Studied analytically, significant factors that emerge are those of being over twenty-eight with one’s identity and role already formed, even forged, into a basically sacramental minister, combined with an idealization

of both the Jesuit community (which proves disappointing) and Jesuit brilliance (which is not often enough encountered). For Jesuits, administration of the sacraments is an important aspect of ministry but not always the most crucial and central. I believe that community living provides the toughest challenge for priests who are geared to independent living. Some desirous of closer community support find everything an ordeal, from shared cars and schedules to shared bathroom facilities. Independence is hard to sacrifice, even on the altar of community intimacy.

The comments of two other directors suggest that this factor should perhaps be renamed either “community living” or “age”:

The only thing I would add is that what you mention regarding diocesan priests and their difficulty with community I have seen in people entering after thirty years of age. They were too set in their ways to be able to adapt to community life.

As another novice director once remarked, with people over thirty, what you see is what you get. The following comment further expands the analysis:

Personality conflicts and differing philosophies of life (liberal, conservative and so forth) played a significant role. In no case was the community situation the single, overriding factor, but in most cases it was an important contributing factor in an individual’s decision to leave.

NOVITIATE SERVES CHURCH

A popular song asks “Where have all the flowers gone?” Studying our statistics, one might be tempted to conclude that the real goal of Jesuit formation is to produce excellent Catholic laymen—plus a few Jesuits. This impression was solidified for me when my entering class (1959) hosted a twenty-fifth anniversary reunion for ourselves, our first-year novitiate confreres, and former Jesuits and their wives. Of course, we hailed from that decimated decade, the sixties, so could our experience be interpreted as atypical? The class of eighteen Jesuits from a class of sixty novices rejoiced with the excellent Catholic laymen who had been our former colleagues.

It is perhaps still too early to tell how our own formation program will fare in the future. The first man has not yet been ordained, and the cultural instability factor must contextualize our careful advance screening, candidacy program, and training in discernment within a much larger reality.

These reflections need not sound gloomy or desolating. I view my years in formation ministry positively, as a service not just to the Society, in the lives of those who remain, but to the wider Church where the uprooted and transplanted flowers are blooming in great variety and abundance. Shifting our perspective from “why they leave or stay” to “how they live and grow” reveals the action of God’s grace and provides motives for hope.

Rescue of City Things

JAMES TORRENS, S.J.

I am the light of the city,
a crack of green on the gray block.

I am the glint to contradict
any designs of knife upon a purse.

I burn through the exhaust of sundown,
and join in the watch over neighborhoods.

Strike me, I ask, into dark pockets
where the old have none to jingle against.

Proceed with me as a plain candle
into the nightglare hurtful to late stars.

What if no rooster be allowed to crow!
I can still dawn out of the sleepless.

In Mexico City I have seen wear and tear on my students from traffic snarls, close encounters with theft or assault, depression (their own or that of friends), and government takeover of properties (to build low-cost housing). The remarkable thing is, in fact, people's resilience. Since the 1985 earthquake, at all events, and the rise of pollution to record levels, the quality of life, or concern about how to improve it, has been a constant topic in *la Capital*. Mexican writers have been giving their major city this attention for some time. José Carlos Becerra wrote in 1976:

This city hurts me,
it hurts me, for its progress falls heavy on me
like an invincible dead man;
it is like eternity asleep with its back turned
to all of my questions.

Living in the city takes a lot out of you. Perhaps I should not talk, having passed my adult life under lesser compression, in those greener tracts known as the suburbs. Still, besides having some extended experience of San Francisco, I am just now finishing four months in Mexico City, which should count for something.

Salvador Novo, looking out in the morning, imagined this: "A white soapy foam floats in the watery sky." Enrique Gonzalez Rojo identified the city with "houses of thirty stories, architectural wasp nests." (One of these nests, part of a development in Tlal-telolco, came down in the earthquake.) Jaime La-bastida, underlining the division between those who profit and those who pay dearly in our "sumptuous cities, those solemn chatterboxes," noted the continual danger: "We are living cruel times/and have to keep our eye out for/the remorseless man with axe in hand/as if he's crossing a forest." Finally, Efrain Huerta emerged in the past generation as a dyed-in-the-wool Chilango (as residents of Mexico City are

known, for their heavy consumption of chile), a reciter of street names and rider of buses in this city “one is enamored of—there’s no remedy for it.” Huerta, who wrote a “Declaration of Love” to the capital, also found himself driven to a stinging “Declaration of Hate”:

City so complicated, boiling pot of envies,
breeding ground of virtues undone in an hour,
a nest each of us occupies like a burning word ignored,
surface we cross in an obscure passage,
desert where we breathe vices out and in,
a dense wood rained upon by sad and piercing tears

Huerta seems to bear out the claim of his contemporary Alí Chumacero that “the poet is a sad man, disconsolate at heart.” Yet more fairly we can discover in him, purely and simply, a man sensitive to the totality of things round about—what the French called, making the preposition into a noun, *environment*. Anyone who has tried, after all, knows how hard it is to get one’s thoughts together in the city. One has the sense of being jostled through life. “In my city,” said Mariángelos Comesaña, “where itchiness runs from pole to pole,/and the trees have lost the language of birds,/I have learned to throb without let-up” (“City Gray Hen”). A period of prayer or reflection is likely to have, for background noise, the gunning of motors, impatient horns, car alarms going off, if not the slamming of doors, arguments, or heavy music through thin walls.

REVERENCE POSSIBLE TOO

Of course, human beings have tended to heap together for a long time, most of it with precious few of the conveniences we now take for granted. But whereas some things hugely improve, others get grimmer. Ignatius of Loyola loved to go out late onto the roof of the Jesuit college in Rome to contemplate the stars. Leroi Jones (now Imam Amiri Baraka, fighting to improve his home city of Newark) put the heavenly prospect in terms more familiar to modern city folk: “And now each night I count the stars,/ And each night I get the same number.” A mere handful, of course, and often “they will not come to be counted.” The grim humor of city life is in his title: “Preface to a Twenty-Volume Suicide Note.”

What with the drift of grime about us and the rundown look so omnipresent, it is hard to stop, look, admire, praise. It is hard to translate into big-city daily experience the conviction of Rainer Maria Rilke, early in this century, that “to be here is much, and the transient Here/seems to need and concern us strangely. Us, the most transient.” Rilke devoted the ninth of his *Duino Elegies* to insisting that we bear a responsibility to the objects among which our life is set. Not that we are to define ourselves by the possession of “things,” but rather to elicit from ourselves a respect for things. This is the kind of reverence

for creatures, precisely, that Ignatius of Loyola proposes as the “Principle and Foundation” to his *Spiritual Exercises*.

The trouble with all our absorption in projects and tasks, according to Rilke, is that “more than ever/the things that we can live by are falling away,/supplanted by an action without symbol,” deeds without any depth. He warned also against the withdrawal tactic of spiritualism, that is, against going to dwell on some exalted plane rather than taking interest in “the simple thing that is shaped in passing from father to son,/that lives near our hands and eyes as our very own.” What is it that passes on thus, and improves along the way? Palpable things that we tend, or upon which we can exercise our skills, giving shape, repairing—plant life, wood, food, fabrics, machinery, circuitry. This is the material on which the earthly imagination works.

In the dreariest parts of the city, people have given up trying to put an appealing face on things; the objects of business or the home surroundings are treated offhandedly, even roughly. The clean-up people, those unsung city heroes, never seem to penetrate to these sectors. Yet even the objects with a grimy face, including those that we synthesize from chemicals, are making their appeal—for careful handling, imagination, and even more, a kind of reverence:

. these things that live,
slipping away, understand that you praise them;
transitory themselves, they trust us for rescue.
. They wish us to transmute them
in our invisible heart
Earth, isn’t this what you want: *invisibly*
to arise in us?

Rilke accepted this charge: “Earth, dear one, I will!” True, he wrote this at a time when his friends offered him lodging in the country, away from the afflicted urban masses. Still, he broaches to everyone the challenge to be contemplative in the very hive of busyness—to subordinate one’s anxiety about upward mobility, or success in projects, or merely surviving, to the appreciative use of eyes and an imaginative handling of the ordinary.

One thinks here instinctively of Teilhard de Chardin, who loved the earth intensely and did live for long periods in the great urban centers—Paris, Peking, New York (where he died on Easter, 1955). Teilhard vowed himself to the earth from youth, with an earnestness that shocked some people and sounded pagan to them. These people quite mistook Teilhard, as Father Henri de Lubac was constantly at pains to point out. De Lubac would have us notice Teilhard twice quoting a favorite mystic, St. Angela of Foligno, and commenting, “St. Angela saw that every creature is full of God.” Father Teilhard, de Lubac said, “translates this classic teaching into his language, speaking of that ‘universal transparency’

We want to make our surroundings the matter of our praise, almost in spite of themselves

to the eyes of faith which for him constitutes the 'divine milieu.'

Teilhard had a vision, which he expressed daringly in "Messe sur le Monde." He saw the earth, transparent with Christ, becoming as it were Eucharistic. Central to this vision, as we learn from other works of his, was the unity, or unification, of peoples over the surface of the planet, the inevitability of a kind of world-city. We shudder at the thought; he would accuse us of little faith. He was convinced that the more complex our organizations, the greater the chances for human awareness and development.

FAITH GIVES PERSPECTIVE

Actually, for many people, life in the city produces euphoria, excitement. They are charged with its energies, grateful for its multiple resources. They are bored anywhere else. May their genuine optimism not blunt their awareness of the terrible wear and tear on so many fellow citizens. Teilhard himself knew quite well the resistances of matter and that

city living is marked deeply with the cross—the very sign that we can imagine people making these days for protection as they go down into the subway.

Teilhard felt a pressing call to work for the success of the world; he found this call implicit in the petition of the Our Father, "thy kingdom come." For Teilhard, the success of the world had a real tie both to preparing and to reflecting the Kingdom of God. He thought of this planet—and especially of its cities, we may say—as the stuff for a metamorphosis; from it new heavens, a new earth, may emerge.

That calls for a heavy dose of faith, as we think of our urban conglomerates and their chaos. But we start where we find ourselves, which means often enough as irreversibly city people. As Labastida put it, "The city is in me, the city which erases me and writes me." And Alexander Aura said, "No way to retract a foot/so as to forget the city./It holds me for good,/I am its vice." Vicente Quirarte, speaking directly to the city in "A Eulogy for the Street," expressed our ambiguous relationship with it as being something like this:

to fling down finally in a chance hotel
our being, tired out with existence,
and just as our muscles and eyelids are capitulating,
still to remember you
and love you, even after the battle,
even though tomorrow, waking up again, we ask:
"here we are, city, and why the devil?"

So we want, or should want, to foster and to put our own touch upon the creatures around us, those that move and those that stay still. We want to make our surroundings the matter of our praise, almost in spite of themselves. If this often means taking initiative in the face of sullen resistance, and we do not know where the courage will come from, we have these chiding but also impelling words from one who promised to be present for all eventualities, "O you of little faith."

Note: The translation of Rilke is by C. F. MacIntyre, in *The Duino Elegies*, University of California Press, 1963. The sources for Teilhard de Chardin are *The Prayer of Teilhard de Chardin*, Henri de Lubac, S.J., chapter 4, and *Un Prophète en Procès: Teilhard de Chardin*, René d'Ounice, S.J., Volume II. For the city poetry of Mexico, I am indebted to Professor Manuel Muñoz Aguado of the Universidad Iberoamericana, and to his students. The translations are mine.

THE PROCESS CALLED WORKING THROUGH

WILLIAM A. BARRY, S.J., Ph.D.

I've told you I was sorry, and I've done everything I can to make it up to you. You said you forgave me, but this is the fifth time in the past month you've blown up at me and thrown my failure in my face. Is it ever going to end?

This could be the complaint of a wife to a husband who seems unable to get over a cutting remark she made in the presence of his boss. It could be the complaint of a friend to a friend, of a religious to a superior. The husband, friend, or superior may feel equally baffled at the recurrence of feelings that he or she thought long interred.

It can be very disconcerting and disheartening for anyone to experience such recurrences, but for those who take a religious stance toward life, who want to imitate God in forgiving and loving, they are especially painful. We wonder whether we love or forgive at all, whether we are just deceiving ourselves with pious platitudes when we say "I love you" or "I forgive you." In this article I would like to shed some light on this phenomenon by looking closely at the process psychoanalysts call "working through."

First, we need to become clear about the phenomenon itself. Two friends, Joe and Mike, have had a falling out because Joe revealed one of Mike's secrets to a third party and Mike found out about it, to his horror. Since they have been friends for years, neither one of them wants the friendship to end, although Mike has told Joe that they were through as friends. Joe is genuinely sorry and ashamed of himself. He knows now what a betrayal his action was, although at the time he intended no harm to Mike. He has told Mike how ashamed and sorry he is and asked his forgiveness. After a few days he again calls Mike to say that he's sorry and that he hopes their friendship can continue. Mike has begun to realize how much Joe's friendship has meant to him. He feels a void when he imagines life without Joe's friendship. He is also a prayerful man and senses an inability to relate to Jesus as long as he harbors his resentment and rage. He has begun to ask Jesus for help to forgive and forget. So he agrees to meet with Joe. During the course of a stormy conversation, Mike accepts Joe's apology. Joe is chastened by the whole experience and resolves to watch his tongue more carefully in the future. Mike has come to believe that Joe meant no harm and, while somewhat wary, determines not to be suspicious of Joe's ability

Many find it very hard to believe that God loves them, warts and moles and all, no matter how often God proves it

to respect confidences. They resume their friendship with relief and euphoria.

They are both nonplussed when Mike's anger and resentment flare up anew a week later and then periodically for the next two months. Joe now begins to get angry at Mike, and Mike to wonder about himself. Will they ever really get over the breach in the relationship?

APPARENTLY NO CHANGE

Breaches in relationship and a seeming inability to get over them also occur very often in relationships with the Lord. Many find it very hard to believe that God loves them, warts and moles and all, no matter how often God proves it. On a retreat, one such person, Joan, has a profound experience of the Lord's love that dispels all her earlier doubts that God could ever love and forgive her. She feels free and euphoric, a changed person who will no longer, it seems to her, be prey to the self-doubts and fears that have periodically plagued her. Three days after the retreat, she begins to pray and reads the words of Jesus to the woman with the flow of blood: "Your faith has made you well" (Mk 5:34). She senses Jesus' eyes on her and feels afraid, afraid that he sees too little faith. All her self-doubts return, and she is very discouraged. When she tells her spiritual director what has happened, the director, too, gets discouraged because it seems that nothing has changed in Joan in spite of the profound experience on retreat.

Experiences such as these occur over and over again in our lives. It can seem as though we never really change but are doomed to an endless cycle,

like a hamster running in a cage. It can be disheartening. As I thought about this predicament, I recalled an essay of Sigmund Freud that put me onto the notion that we might find light in the psychoanalytic concept of "working through." In the essay "Further Recommendations in the Technique of Psychoanalysis," Freud notes that the first step in overcoming resistance occurs when the analyst helps the client to see that he is resisting. (This insight, I might add, is usually accompanied by a great deal of emotion.) Freud continues:

Now it seems that beginners in analytic practice are inclined to look upon this as the end of the work. I have often been asked to advise upon cases in which the physician complained that he had pointed out his resistance to the patient and that all the same no change had set in; in fact, the resistance had only then become really pronounced and the whole situation had become more obscure than ever. The treatment seemed to make no progress. This gloomy foreboding always proved mistaken. The treatment was as a rule progressing quite satisfactorily; only the analyst had forgotten that naming the resistance could not result in its immediate suspension. One must allow the patient time to get to know this resistance of which he is ignorant, to "work through" it, to overcome it, by continuing the work according to the analytic rule in defiance of it.

Let us look more closely at this process of "working through."

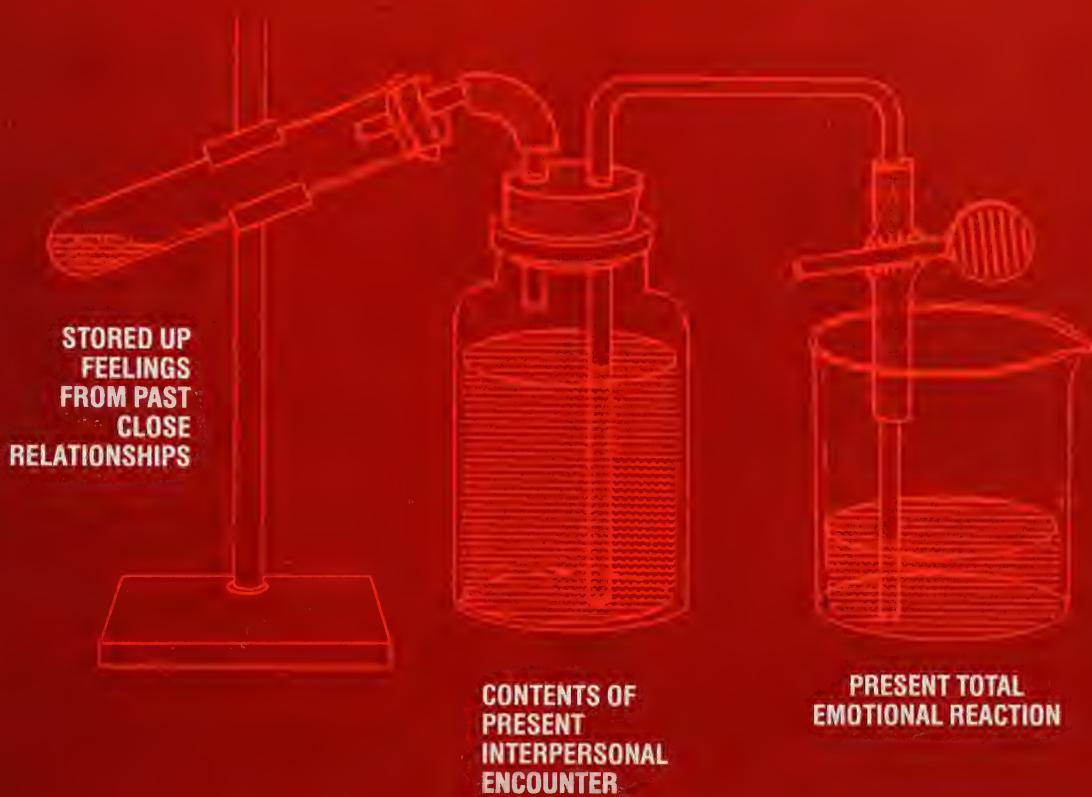
INSIGHT NEEDS REPEATING

Repeatedly in psychoanalytic treatment, the client has an "aha!" experience, a deeply felt emotional insight into the process by which he or she defeats himself or herself. For example, John may realize that he has begun to criticize his analyst, just as he has put down most of his superiors at work, because he has become afraid that the analyst will reject him. At work, his attitude leads to subtle and pernicious office gossip between himself and others that finally makes the place intolerable, and he is either fired or passed over for promotion. In the analysis, he recognizes with great relief that he does not have to be afraid of the analyst or of his bosses, that is to say, they are not his father or mother.

It looks like smooth sailing from here on. But it is not so. Within the week he again begins to feel the same way toward the analyst, and the whole process has to be repeated, but usually with a difference. The second time he sees more of the motivation for his behavior, more of the complex, multivalent desires, fears, and impulses that determine his self-defeating reactions to his superiors. Psychoanalysts note that the resistance to insights such as these dies hard. It takes a lot of patient work by both analyst and client to inter resistance and to keep it (relatively) interred.

Psychoanalysis is a very complex enterprise, as complex as are the human beings who are analysts

THE CHEMISTRY OF AN EMOTIONAL REACTION



and their clients (analysands). It would take us too far afield to explore all the ramifications of John's resistance, but it would not be amiss for our purposes to try to understand some of the complexities of human motivation and behavior.

PRESENT AFFECTED BY PAST

Our personalities are complex psychic structures that have evolved over all the years of our lives. Nothing significant in our lives is completely lost; it has left its residue in our psyches. Thus, every new interaction with someone significant is colored by our past interactions. If I fall in love with someone, for example, at least some of my reactions to this person will be triggered by the psychic structures developed through previous loving interactions with other persons. When I am hurt by something this person does, as another example, at least some of my reactions stem from my past experiences of being

hurt by loved ones. The strength of our emotional responses in the present is often explained only by the theory that our psyches are amalgams of all our past significant encounters.

Moreover, we are often unaware that old wounds have been opened by a new relationship. In fact, we often strongly resist becoming aware because of the anxiety and pain such awareness would bring. And if we do become aware, we have a habit of quickly blocking out its memory. Hence, the need to return again and again to the same issue in psychotherapy. The return is also to deeper and deeper levels of the psychic structure because most of the traumatic events that cause us trouble in present relationships occurred when we were children. John, the psychoanalytic client just mentioned, has built up over years habitual ways of dealing with superiors, ways that have been reinforced by his repeated failures. That is, each experience of being fired or missing a promotion reinforced the feelings of inadequacy that

Every new interaction with someone significant is colored by our past interactions

stemmed from childhood interactions with his parents. Again and again, at ever deeper levels, he must unlearn these reaction patterns, or rather, he must learn new ways of reacting, ways that are more compatible with his present adult reality. But the old patterns die hard because they were developed to cope with overwhelming anxiety in childhood and were reinforced so often in life.

It is with such complex personality structures that we "ordinary neurotics" engage in life and in prayer life. Mike's relationship with Joe is colored by all of his past close relationships. So when he is hurt by Joe, some of his emotional reaction derives from that past. Old wounds are opened. So, too, Joan's reaction to Jesus is colored at least in part by her past experiences with those whom she loved and before whom she felt inadequate.

We never have an experience, even an experience of God, that is not somehow tinged with the residues of our past experiences. Hence, the strength of our emotional reactions may often be more attributable to our past experiences than to the present triggering situation. But we are usually unaware of the influence of our past on our reactions. Hence, the present conditions have to bear the responsibility of explaining our reactions. Joe, thus, becomes a totally untrustworthy friend, and all the past evidence of his trustworthiness is either blocked out of memory or rationalized away. Forgiveness means accepting Joe

back into intimate friendship and trust. For Mike, that seems impossible to do. Joan sees only anger and disappointment in Jesus' eyes and knows that she deserves that look because she is so weak in faith. How could she ever have been so foolish as to believe that he loved her?

GOD'S LOVE HEALS

Just as the analytic patient needs time to "work through" resistances to insight, so too do we need time to "work through" our resistances to more adult, Christian behavior. Just as the analytic patient gradually comes to appropriate the insight and to react in new ways in spite of discouraging regressions, so too, if we continue to ask the Lord for his help, can we gradually become more and more Christ-like in spite of our sinfulness. I do not believe that we have to unearth all of the psychic structures that condition present reactions and behavior. For one thing, such archeology of the psyche would take a lifetime of digging. For another, the Lord heals us in hidden ways, and we do not need to know everything. What we need to do is to continue to put ourselves into his loving care to heal our wounds and make our hearts more like the heart of Christ.

Thus, Joan needs only to tell Jesus that his eyes seem angry and disappointed once again and to ask him to help her to relive the experience of the retreat. If each time she feels lost and discouraged she repeats the request, gradually she will discover that the periods of trust and confidence grow longer, the times of doubt and confusion shorter. (It may, of course, be helpful to her also to seek professional counseling if there is a long history of depression. I am only writing now about the ordinary lack of self-confidence most of us have when we face God.) Mike needs to keep asking the Lord to help him to overcome his inability to forgive Joe. He can also help himself by recalling how much Joe means to him and by asking Joe to be patient with him as he works through the hurt and pain. Gradually, Mike will become less prone to recurrences of the feelings of resentment and hurt, less liable to mistrust Joe's friendship. Gradually, Joan and Mike will allow the Spirit of the Lord to transform their psyches, to permeate more and more layers, and thus heal some of life's hurts. But the transformation can only happen if the recurring feelings are not denied; in other words, through a patient willingness to present themselves to the Lord in all their brokenness. Mike, Joan, and the rest of us need to be willing to admit our reality into consciousness and to admit it to the Lord, and to let the Lord's Spirit work through the hurts much as a baker kneads yeast into dough.

Continuing Religious Formation

Report on a Recent Survey of Men in the Director's Role

ROBERT S. PELTON, C.S.C., S.T.D.

The Second Vatican Council called for a serious renewal of the religious life. In the United States, women religious on the whole responded more quickly to this call than did their male counterparts, but the men are now beginning to catch up, at least in some places. One example is seen in a recent study of the male Directors of Continuing Education (DCEs) for their provinces throughout the United States. This research was funded by The National Organization for the Continuing Education of Roman Catholic Clergy (NOCERCC), and it was guided by Dr. Lincoln Johnson, the Director of the Social Science Training and Research Laboratory at the University of Notre Dame. I worked closely with Dr. Johnson in the design and implementation of the survey.

Our questions were sent to seventy provincial representatives, and from these came, in reply, fifty usable responses. This adequate return has provided the basis for some solid insights into the current thinking of DCEs about their work, together with some of the positive and negative dynamics of the position itself.

DIRECTOR'S ROLE ORIENTATION

Considering the position of Director of Continuing Education, we anticipated finding three different orientations to the job: that of a *facilitator*, whose task is to be an available resource for those who would want assistance; that of an *initiator*, whose responsibility is to establish programs in which others participate; and that of a *policy maker*, whose role is to determine directions for the continuing

formation of the religious of a province. What we found in our study is that the most common orientation to the role of DCE was that of facilitator. Eighty percent of the respondents indicated that this orientation was required by their job description. Following closely, the model of initiator was required of approximately 72 percent. Less common was the model of policy maker; 52 percent had this dimension incorporated into their job description.

Not only is the role of facilitator the one most commonly required but it is also the orientation that best reflects the personal emphasis of most of those currently in such a position (64 percent). Fourteen percent indicated that the role of initiator reflects their personal emphasis, whereas only 10 percent stressed that their personal emphasis is on the role of policy maker. Taking into consideration a combination of both the job requirements and the personal emphasis, we found that more directors (46 percent) find satisfaction in the role of facilitator than in the roles of initiator (38 percent) or policy maker (32 percent).

SOURCES OF SATISFACTION

Our survey asked respondents to indicate what factors in their current situation were most helpful in getting their work accomplished. The responses show several clear trends that provide a model of the satisfied DCE. Prominent here were support from religious superiors in the province; continuation of planning and collaboration with the previous DCE; and a good working committee to help facilitate the programmatic work. The commitment of the reli-

Question:

How supportive have each of the following been to you as DCE?

Responses:^{*}

| Sources of support | Very much | Some | Hardly any | None |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------|------------|------|
| Superior participation | 60 | 20 | 4 | 2 |
| Community financing | 74 | 18 | 2 | 0 |
| Members' participation | 14 | 60 | 20 | 0 |
| Community policy and implementation | 32 | 48 | 6 | 6 |

* Expressed as percentage of total replies received

Question:

After personal renewal or educational experiences, how often is there follow-up and evaluation?

Response:^{*}

| | For Individuals | For Programs | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|----|
| Always | 18 | Always | 28 |
| Usually | 20 | Usually | 28 |
| Occasionally | 46 | Occasionally | 30 |
| Never | 10 | Never | 6 |

* Expressed as percentage of total replies received

gious community to continuing formation is a critical aspect for facilitating the work of any DCE. Also mentioned frequently was the availability of financial resources and staff to plan various kinds of events. (The Table above shows where directors have found support for their efforts).

THE DISSATISFIED DIRECTOR

The directors were also asked what factors in their current situation were the greatest hindrance in accomplishing their job. Whereas some factors could have been predicted (e.g., the need for more time, experienced by directors with multiple roles within

the church, and the need for more money, felt by those who had little), other important factors also emerged. Preeminent in the listing of hindrances is the failure of those within the community to see the need for continuing education or continuing formation. Many directors commented about the failure on the part of some community members to perceive a need for this kind of program and the unwillingness or inability (fear?) of others with regard to taking a risk or facing change. In addition, the shift from the traditional, cognitive type of continuing education to a more holistic renewal of the religious as a person is difficult for many. In a number of instances, the ambiguous expectations and ill-defined responsibil-

Respondents indicated that very little effort is being made to assess the educational needs of community members

ties of the DCE were also hindrances. There was some concern expressed also that sometimes continuing education seems to overemphasize the needs of the individual and individual career plans and is not well balanced with concern for the needs of the community. Apparently there is much work to do in convincing members of communities that the kinds of things experienced in continuing education and formation are also important to the life of the church.

SERIOUS NEGLECTS NOTED

Respondents indicated that very little effort is being made to assess the educational needs of community members. Eight percent of the Directors of Continuing Education invest no time or energy at all in such assessment, whereas 62 percent devote only a slight amount of effort to this important task. This neglect highlights another area where significant growth and development is needed.

Just as the assessment of an individual's needs is very weak and in many instances takes place only during transition periods early in a priest's career,

the DCEs also perform very little evaluation of renewal or educational experiences. Only 38 percent of the respondents indicated that there was evaluation of individuals on any regular basis, and only 54 percent reported that in their provinces there was any general evaluation of specific renewal programs. The pattern of results indicates that in the case of nearly half of the individuals and programs, evaluation is either sporadic or nonexistent. When an evaluation does occur it is more likely to be of programs than of individuals and is done informally rather than systematically. When individual follow-up is accomplished, in most instances it is achieved only through chance interviews or conversations.

In view of the neglect of needs assessment and the lack of evaluation of programs and individual experiences, the survey suggests that this is a significant area for development. It might also reflect the fact that many programs developed for continuing education formation are not clear in their purpose or direction (See the Table for statistics).

NEXT STEP PLANNED

As a result of this study, the American DCEs are now planning an intensive workshop based on its key findings. The proposed outcomes for this workshop are as follows:

1. An increased understanding and development of skills related to the assessment of the needs of male religious
2. Strengthened competence in designing renewal and educational programs for provinces
3. An improved ability to evaluate the progress of individuals and the effectiveness of renewal programs
4. A better recognition of and response to the special needs of ministers who are in a state of transition

This projected workshop, it is hoped, will enable DCEs to learn the ways in which they can be of more helpful service to the religious men in their provinces. The long-range result should be a quickening of the pace and deepening of the experience of renewal for the brothers and priests whose personal development and effectiveness in ministry is the DCEs' greatest concern.

LIVING CELIBATELY IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

MATTHIAS NEUMAN, O.S.B., S.T.D.

The phrases "living celibately" and "pastoral ministry" name two dimensions of Christian life that have been subjected to much recent and historical analysis. The experiences of personal, celibate commitment and pastoral service date back to the beginnings of the Christian faith, and their unity in the life-styles of religious men and women extends almost as far into Christian history.

Both contemporary and early church literature have approached the joining of a celibate commitment to pastoral ministry in a variety of ways. Writers have examined the official, "legal" policies of the church; studied the theological reasons for celibacy; and shared their personal experiences of living as celibates within pastoral settings. Other authors have tried to construct a spirituality that integrates church teachings, theological truth, and shared celibate experiences into one's personal relationship with God. Many religious communities, guided by contemporary writers, seek to create formation programs that will prepare young religious women and men for a fulfilled celibate life-style of pastoral service.

One of the primary reasons for the different perspectives in the literature is that each cultural period presents particular and unique challenges to the celibate minister. The tensions of Paul's first-century Greece were not those of Origen's third-century Egypt; nor is our twentieth-century United States akin to Gregory VII's eleventh-century Europe. Aware of the fact that the cultural pressures of American society today are having a profound impact

on celibate pastoral ministers, I want to show in this article that a clearly articulated spirituality of celibate ministry must be developed, and soon.

NEW SPIRITUALITY REQUIRED

Recently, seminary educators have increasingly noted that contemporary formation for celibate ministers desperately needs new insights and approaches. The traditional formative spirituality is simply not sufficient to guide and sustain the young seminarian, priest, or religious through the ministerial tasks and stresses that modern parish ministry presents. A private document issued in 1982 by seminary rectors states, "We realize that many of the older supports for maintaining celibacy . . . have either faded or are being challenged. Some of the contemporary justifications for celibacy, whether hoarded from the past or newly minted, are not authentic for many in formation."

In the rectors' statement, one point clearly stands out: whoever wants to live and work as a celibate pastoral minister in the late twentieth-century must make an explicit, positive spiritual acceptance of the celibate life-style. A simple grudging acceptance of the obligation will not suffice; neither can the minister hope to conveniently avoid this area of life, as if sexuality were not a concern of spirituality. A successful celibate minister needs an articulated spirituality that includes an accepted celibate sexuality.

Most recent writings on spirituality that offer

guidance for the pastoral minister tend to emphasize the positive religious structures needed to sustain the celibate commitment. The rectors' document, for example, stresses the need for a healthy prayer life, a satisfying ministry, and a supportive community. These elements are certainly crucial, but it is also important to understand the climate of the everyday world in which the modern pastoral minister must live and work. Even while pursuing the positive supports of prayer, ministry, and community, the challenges of the cultural context must be clearly identified and evaluated by the minister if his or her celibate commitment is to be maintained.

TODAY'S CULTURAL CONTEXT

The following points of cultural analysis might serve as the framework within which celibate individuals must consistently affirm, nourish, and defend their personal commitment. First, any pastoral minister today must recognize and accept the fact that sexuality permeates American culture. Anyone who lives within modern Western society is aware that sexual implications pervade our language, images, and thoughts. An individual who is not personally prepared to confront the many challenges sexuality presents—in personal identity, in human relationships, in moral and social issues, even in questions of theology—should reconsider the choice of contemporary pastoral ministry. As many studies of psychology and cultural anthropology have shown, sexuality does not function as an inert, neutral factor in a person's life; it will work toward either the integration or the fragmentation of the personality.

It will not suffice for the celibate to assume that sexual issues can be safely avoided or neatly compartmentalized. The powerful sexuality in American society requires that a Christian pastoral minister be prepared to deal continually with sexual issues in the areas of ministry, theology, and spirituality. Thus, the celibate life-style of the minister needs to be consciously understood, accepted, and affirmed as a positive component of that minister's faith and spirituality.

Second, almost every type of contemporary ministry involves an element of sexuality. Youth ministers spend many hours counseling and talking with teenagers about sexual identity and relationships. Religious education teachers find that sexual concerns are included in questions about belief, priorities, and life-style values. Social-justice ministers are confronted by issues of sexism, sexual abuse, and pornography. It goes without saying that family-life and marriage ministers, spiritual directors, and sacramental ministers often listen to sexual concerns. Unless pastoral ministers shield themselves from the inner lives of those they serve, sexual issues will occupy many of their conversations.

Ongoing discussions about sexual matters will ultimately affect the minister's own interior life. Sexual

images may appear more often, sexual implications will surface in interpersonal behavior, and sexual identity may be repeatedly questioned. One religious sister who moved from a sheltered position at her motherhouse to a high school teaching job was troubled by the sudden increase of sexual images in her fantasy life. She needed to learn that she was experiencing a normal result of the transition in her everyday world. This increase in the sexual content of interior consciousness challenges ministers to be clearly cognizant of their own sexuality.

Third, a pastoral minister must be prepared to deal with accusations or sarcastic and derogatory comments about his or her sexual choice and life-style. Sexual expression has become a part of social status, personal esteem, and psychological well-being. In a culture where sexual engagement is seen to be necessary for complete human fulfillment, someone who promises to live without that engagement appears incomplete. Pastoral ministers must be personally and spiritually prepared to accept the criticism that is reflected in judgements about their choices concerning sexual expression. Such comments, over a period of time, can begin to subtly influence one's perceptions. A spirituality of celibate ministry must include support systems to guard against interior disintegration.

This cultural examination shows that a celibate minister must possess a strong conviction of being a positive sexual person, but being one who has chosen to limit sexual expressiveness for the sake of a religious vision. Living celibately in the pastoral ministry demands a direct affirmation of a celibate sexuality as it relates to a deliberately chosen religious hierarchy of values. This choice of sexual expression must be integrated in one's style and goals of ministry; the minister needs to be loved and supported in this choice.

CHALLENGES TO COMMITMENT

I want to point out some of the ways in which a minister's celibate commitment might be challenged by contemporary ministerial situations.

In today's church, good ministers are expected to be compassionate and sensitive to the needs of those with whom they work. This quality of ministry may benefit people, but the psychological cost to the minister necessitates consistent "psychic refueling." Ministers often experience life-giving, supportive companionship in the form of intimate friendships. Because intimacy is so important to a healthy personal and spiritual life, many celibate ministers seek relationships within religious support groups, with heterosexual friends, and with particular families.

The basic impulse of these friendships is healthy, but possible dangers must be recognized. Although ministers receive vital support from their friends, they must reflect on their shared intimacy. Occasionally, unresolved sexual issues or vocational

POSSIBLE THREATS TO COMMITMENT



IMMATURE OR UNHEALTHY RESPONSE
TO MINISTER AS A SEXUAL PERSON

MINISTER'S REACTION TO STRESS
EXPRESSED SEXUALLY

INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS ACCOMPANIED BY PERSONAL
SEXUAL CONFLICTS OR VOCATIONAL UNCERTAINTY

questions are revealed by studying these relationships. In order to be prepared for a celibate commitment, the minister must understand that celibacy includes not simply restraints on physical sexuality but careful examination of the psychological aspects of the single life.

Another possible challenge to a minister's celibate commitment arises from the symbolic role of the minister in the American Catholic Church. Parishioners will notice and respond to the minister not just as a professional person but as a sexual human being. This is a normal phenomenon; however, not all parishioners relate to the sexuality of parish ministers in mature or healthy ways. The minister may have to deal directly and openly with sexual overtones. Through all of this, the celibate individual needs to have the personal and professional skills to manage the situation; he or she must have a positive sense of celibate sexuality to function effectively in these circumstances.

A third challenge to celibacy results from the fact that tension or hostility from other areas of life can easily be channeled into sexual expression. Anger, work conflict, family problems, and normal tensions of pastoral ministry can subtly become transformed into a desire for some kind of sexual release. This may begin by viewing x-rated movies or reading pornographic magazines. These activities may be justified by the person, but unresolved sexual issues may result in masturbation or genital interpersonal involvement. After such patterns of sexual release have been formed, change can only occur through a painful reorganization of one's personal and spiritual life.

In brief, the cultural context may challenge the minister's celibate commitment through confused

intimate friendships, latent sexual implications of the minister's actions, or through channeling stress into sexual expression. The celibate pastoral minister must maintain his or her celibate commitment by integrating the spiritual and personal aspects of celibacy into a living pastoral ministry. A positive spirituality of celibate sexuality is an essential requirement for these men and women.

SPIRITUALITY WILL INTEGRATE

Discussions concerning the practical and theological merits of celibate pastoral ministry will surely continue, as will suggestions and articles dealing with proper formation for celibate ministry. The mainstream social context, with all of its positive and negative dimensions, necessitates the development of a strong, functional spirituality for celibate ministers. Such a spirituality demands theoretical and practical, traditional and contemporary, defensive and creative, qualities. This spirituality will seek to integrate constantly a celibate sexuality into the tasks and goals of ministry and to evaluate both in the context of the present cultural ethos.

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DECLINE IN RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS

Why Have They Gone? Why Don't More Come?

JOHN CARROLL FUTRELL, S.J., S.T.D.

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To begin my reflections on the current decline in vocations to the religious life, there are certain underlying assumptions that should be stated:

1. An authentically discerned vocation to the religious life is an experience of God personally encountered in a way that demands response through vowed life.
2. Normally, God brings vocation to a person's awareness through the ordinary process of personal identification that is gone through by anyone who becomes psychologically adult. Personal identification occurs in the act of free, unconditional commitment to day-by-day creative fidelity until death in actualizing this identity, this "life project"—what I really want as my total life meaning and value.
3. Creative fidelity means always choosing to relate to whatever comes into one's self-awareness (God, other people, self, things, limit situations) in ways that integrate with one's identity, actualizing and fulfilling it, rather than in ways that would chip away at it through destructive infidelity.
4. Through day-by-day creative fidelity, a person will grow over a period of time to such a wholeness and rootedness in identity that it becomes psychologically impossible to choose to change his or her identity, even though this is always theoretically possible for the free human being. Thus, when a great crisis occurs, demanding a choice either to change one's identity or to renounce some other greatly desired good, one will find that one must choose to be faithful, even if this demands freely choosing to be put to death. Paradoxically, one feels, "I must be faithful," yet feels this as the most truly free act one has ever done. C. S. Lewis, in *Surprised by Joy*, put it, "Necessity may not be the opposite of freedom. A [person] is most free, when, instead of producing motives, [the person] can only say, 'I am what I do.' " In Robert Bolt's play *A Man for All Seasons*, Thomas

More chooses to be beheaded rather than to deny his faith, because to do that would be to choose no longer to be More, no longer to be himself. I am faithful to Jesuit priesthood not because of any public statements that I have declared, nor because of any papers that I have signed, nor because of any ritual actions that have been performed on my person; I am faithful because I cannot choose to not be myself, to commit suicide on the level of personal identity.

5. Crisis—being confronted by an either/or choice between two goods deeply desired but impossible to have together—brings a person to a deeper realization than before of what his or her life commitment means, of how much it means to him or her. Each act of free recommitment to personal identity roots a person more integrally in it.
6. To have the necessary ego strength for fidelity, a person must have clarity of personal identity. If I do not know who I am (what I am committing myself to), then it is impossible to discern a way of expressing this identity authentically in behavior and relationships, and there is no true reality to be faithful to, particularly when, in crisis, an alternative, incompatible, deeply desired good is quite clear.
7. Since religious life is lived in community with other persons sharing the experience of the same life call from God, communal clarity of corporate identity is necessary, in order for individuals to know that their own personal identity is truly the same corporate identity. If the members do not have the same understanding of their identity as Christian, as Roman Catholic, as religious, and as persons gifted with the specific charism of their founder, then personal identity crisis is inevitable, and leaving the community is likely.
8. Clarity of corporate identity is the basis for communal discernment of the ways God calls us through the signs of our times to express authentically our identity as religious in our community

life-style and in our choice of ministries. Even if this clarity is shared by all, however, discernment is still impossible without corporate freedom to recognize and say "Yes" to God's calls to the community, no matter what the cost. Persons in a community that lacks corporate freedom for discernment can fall into discouragement or even despair about renewal, which can lead to seeking a more meaningful life elsewhere.

9. Corporate freedom is the combination of the individual spiritual freedoms of the members of the community. Communal discernment is possible only when the members are individually discerning persons, not clinging to idols, ready to sacrifice self-directed goals for the sake of the discerned goals of the community. The lack of such individual freedom, then, can bring about a disillusionment with the community that can lead persons to leave.

REASONS FOR DEPARTURE

With these underlying assumptions stated, I shall now reflect on why those who left religious life during the last twenty years did so. My reflections are based on the personal experience of giving spiritual direction or conversing intimately with many people who did leave, particularly during the late sixties and early seventies, but also quite recently. These reflections have been shared with other spiritual directors and religious superiors, who have arrived at similar conclusions. Rather than detailing sociological pressures (authority problems, community problems, shift of ministry problems, and so on) that experts have already studied (for example, Sister Marie Agusta Neal, the CARA study, and others) I shall focus on the dimension of free, personal choice, which each individual must make in facing the ultimately unpredictable circumstances and relationships encountered in living out commitment to any personal identity.

Why did those who chose to leave make this choice, rather than the choice to stay made by others facing the same situations? I have found that there are generally two categories of persons facing this choice. The first category comprises persons who, as a matter of fact, had never made the free act of commitment that effects personal identification. Some of these persons during the late sixties and early seventies were more than sixty years old. They had grown up in a stable national culture, in a stable, extended family, in a very stable church. Many of them at a very early age had entered an aspirancy or postulancy in an extremely stable religious congregation. They had passed their lives until Vatican II without any crisis, in a highly protected, stable environment as religious engaged in stable apostolates or lives of contemplation. If Vatican II had not occurred, they likely would have gone to their deaths (as many, undoubtedly, had before them) in com-

The rise of cults responds to a more desperate need to be "told" the truth

plete tranquillity as religious. With the changes brought about in prayer, worship, community, and ministry so dramatically by Vatican II, these persons were plunged into crisis for the first time in their lives. It surfaced in awareness, often, as loss of clarity about corporate identity ("This is not the religious life I entered") or as lack of freedom to discern adaptations of religious life to the signs of the times, because of fixing one's sense of security in the old practices. These crises enabled these persons to recognize that although they had gone through the juridical procedures of public proclamation of vows, they had never actually gone through identity crisis and so had never really made interior personal commitment to this vocation. Their case is similar to that of persons who go through the form of marriage that is actually null because they are not capable of free consent to life commitment. Through this crisis, these religious at last consciously confronted the question, "What do I really want as my personal identity? What is my real vocation, God's actual life call to me?"

Through the process of spiritual direction, persons were enabled to discern the answer to this question, which turned out to be one of two alternatives. Although it had never been truly discerned before, and true, personal commitment had never been made, it becomes clear to the religious choosing the first alternative that this is his or her true vocation from God. The person now, for the first time, makes internal commitment, knowing that God will build upon all his or her history in growing the religious in authenticity and holiness. Indeed, people have experienced this as a great leap forward. To the relief of the spiritual director, nothing is required in the

juridical forum to adjust to the new internal reality.

In the second alternative, discernment makes clear that the person does not now have and has never had a vocation to the religious life. The spiritual director needs to help the person discern what God's true life call is for her or him and help the person to realize with Paschal faith, that God will bring new life right out of what, humanly, was a mistaken choice of vocation. The necessary juridical procedures for dispensation then take place.

IDENTITY GRADUALLY LOST

The second category of persons choosing to leave is that of persons who are certain that they truly did at one time make life commitment to religious life vocation. The crisis they now confront has made them aware, however, that for a long time (perhaps many years) they have not been creatively faithful in their ordinary, routine, daily lives to the behaviors demanded for authentic living of this vocation. Instead, in many little ways, they have day by day been chipping away at the core of their personal identity by destructive infidelity. This has been unconscious, since the infidelities have never been big enough to call attention to themselves, and the religious never engaged in prayerful reflection on how faithfully, or not, they were living out their vocation every day. Consequently, when confronted by the crisis of an either/or choice between fidelity to their vocation and some other deeply desired, incompatible good, they are pushed to the depths of self-awareness for the first time in a long time, and they discover that the core of personal identity has been chipped down to a weak thread rather than actualized by daily creative fidelity that makes the wholeness experienced by a Thomas More.

In my experience, religious confronted by such a crisis have made one of two choices. In one alternative, the person makes the choice to recommit himself or herself to the personal identity originally discerned as vocation, even though this means freely choosing a crucifying renunciation of the other good so deeply desired, with Paschal faith that God will bring new life out of this death. This is a moment of profound conversion, and it entails conscious changes of attitudes and behaviors with far-reaching effects for the person's spiritual growth. It is a true leap forward.

In the second alternative, even though commitment had once been made, the person feels that the core of identity has been so weakened, and the desire for the incompatible good is so pressing, that she or he chooses to leave the vocation for a different identity allowing him or her to have the other, wanted good. Here, the spiritual director helps the person to have Paschal faith that God will bring new life out of this decision and to grow in spiritual openness to recognize and allow this.

This second alternative is chosen not only by per-

sons desiring another vocation, such as marriage or another professional occupation, but also by people who, recognizing that recommitment to the religious life now would mean entering into the slow process of corporate renewal, requiring shared rediscovery of corporate identity and continuing efforts to discern communally how to express this together according to the signs of the times, felt that they wanted instead to choose an identity with more immediate clarity and rewards.

Some persons were led into crisis as the result of the pain and frustration experienced in some congregations that lost the experience of corporate identity through growing confusion and lack of clarity, or through finding it impossible to communicate with one another on the level of shared experience of God. Sometimes, disagreements over issues of adaptation of community life-style and choice of ministries led to lethal polarization. Persons found their lives miserable and saw no hope of real renewal in the foreseeable future, and they experienced crisis. Some religious discerned a call from God to "cling to the rock and bleed," devoting the rest of their lives to the challenging effort to move the community forward in renewal. Others discerned a call to live out their religious vocation by transferring to another congregation. Still others were led through this crisis into one of the two categories described above. A few individuals left the religious life because of a much deeper shift of identity that resulted in their ceasing to be Catholic or Christian or theist.

Ultimately, human beings do what they want to do. People who left the religious life did so because they wanted to, sometimes as a result of authentic discernment, sometimes not. Some have regretted the decision; others rejoice that they made it. I see as key underlying factors for leaving lack of clarity about corporate and personal identity and lack of corporate and individual freedom for discernment, which requires a continuing life of prayer.

YOUNG NOT ENTERING

In 1982, at their national convention, the vocation directors of men's and women's religious congregations asked me to reflect with them on trends in spirituality today, since these reveal felt needs and desires of young persons responding to new life situations in the world in which we live, the signs of our times. Four of the most visible trends among young persons formed by contemporary culture are discussed below.

Seeking for Life Meaning. Because of the great pluralism of ideologies competing for followers through manipulation of media to persuade adherence, people are left confused about where truth is to be found, afraid to make decisive choices, and fearful that life, finally, is meaningless and absurd. One aspect of this search is hunger for transcendent experience as a way of escaping the anguish, if not to discover mean-

If the religious living together are clearly unhappy, hostile, unforgiving, or in need of healing, this group will attract no one

ing. Drugs will have to do, if nothing else seems to help. The rise of cults responds to a more desperate need to be "told" the truth. The influence of this on believers has brought about trends in spirituality toward deep desire for prayer, especially prayer aimed toward felt experience of God; toward renewed interest in the study of theology to become convinced of truths of faith, rather than to speculate; and toward the desire in some Christians to be "told" the truth.

Need for Supportive Groups. The depersonalization of modern life has atomized families and groups and left many individuals feeling lonely and isolated. This has led to the creation of arenas where people can meet "their own kind," such as senior citizens' clubs, physical fitness centers, and singles' bars.

This search is also manifested in the rise of cults. Thus, in spirituality we find trends toward groups seeking shared spiritual experience and expression, such as charismatic renewal, Focolare, Marriage Encounter, Jesu Caritas, and prayer groups. Often, people feel that the solidity of their own faith and vocation depends on having a real support group.

Seeking Meaningful Interpersonal Relationships. In the total culture, the loneliness syndrome leads persons to yearn for emotional and physical expressions of affection and love. The various positive and negative aspects of the much discussed "sexual revolution" respond to this need. Many young persons, because of their family backgrounds, are starved for loving personal relationships while being confused about their sexual identity. Accordingly, there is a trend in spirituality to explore affectivity, friendship, and sexuality, both in Christian marriage and in living consecrated celibacy.

Narcissism. Much study has been devoted during recent years to the "I want to be me" dynamic, which results from the pervasive experience in contemporary society of being forced into a faceless mass and of being only a cipher in a computer program. This dynamic leads to sometimes bizarre efforts to express individuality and to be antisocial except toward those very similar persons who can together defy all others because "We want to be us." In spirituality, this dynamic is manifested in a trend toward seeking "my own thing" at the expense of the corporate identity and mission of a faith community. Together with the three previously described trends, this makes persons less sensitive to mission and to ministry than to "me."

NOT SATISFYING NEEDS

In the light of these trends, reflection on the small number of young people entering religious life today suggests to me that we are not being very successful in responding to their needs. Life meaning can be provided by clarity of corporate identity. Veteran religious are painfully aware that many of us are not only confused about the identity of the religious life vocation but even proclaim contradictory new definitions of it, as quite different persons seek to make religious life over in their own image and likeness. Some communities have done an effective clarification of their charism and found it to be shared by all, only to founder on the rock of opposed understandings of what it means to be a religious. When lack of clarity of corporate identity as Roman Catholic and/or Christian is added to this, then an even more confused image of corporate identity is communicated to the public. Young people today looking for identity through clear life meaning will certainly not be attracted to a community apparently made up of divided and confused individuals. In the late sixties, novice directors reported that some of the few young people entering would explain their motivation by saying, "I like the challenge of working with the community on discovering its identity after Vatican II." Today, this is rarely the case.

Supportive groups would be expected, in principle, to be the reality of local religious communities. Because of polarization and politicization during the last twenty years, this is often not the case. If the religious living together are clearly unhappy, hostile, unforgiving, or in need of healing, this group will attract no one. If the impression given is that of a "self-selected" community that has escaped from Christ's command to love and forgive enemies and so to be recognized as his followers, this is more likely to be seen as a cop-out than as a challenging *Christian* community. If the option has been made to live together as persons do in a men's or women's club, this is recognized as possible to do elsewhere, without the renunciations of the religious vows. Young people today, too, tend to see the need for

leadership to unify the members of a free, adult community to achieve their common goals. Thus, "superiorless" communities can strike them as floundering rather than as being significant for shared life and purpose.

Meaningful interpersonal relationships within religious communities must be grounded in the shared experience of God calling these unique individuals together to form human community for carrying out the corporate mission of their charism. The human bond does not grow out of choosing persons we simply would like to be with (I have never met a Jesuit I wanted to marry!); rather, it is given by God, who with his sense of humor, calls these particular persons together for mission as religious. The persons quickly discover that to be an effective faith community of corporate mission, they must work together to create interpersonal relationships of real, human, mutual understanding, mutual trust, mutual support, mutual love. If we were successful in forming authentic religious community, what young persons looking at our local communities would see would be true apostolic communities of love. Today, unhappily, there are not a lot of these. Furthermore, we still have a great deal to do in showing ways of growing in affective fulfillment through authentically celibate love relationships.

Narcissism, in principle, should be overcome by the very dynamic of persons growing together into mature faith communities of corporate mission. If, as happens at times, the impression is given that individual religious or like-minded cliques are more committed to their own agenda or political ideology than to the shared call of the community to corporate mission of its charism and to the consequent ways of being and doing together discerned as God's calls to them to carry out the mission according to the signs of the times, then people will see nothing to attract them to join such a group.

RENEWAL IS ANSWER

I have suggested that key underlying factors for persons leaving the religious life during the past twenty years have been lack of clarity about corporate identity and lack of corporate and individual freedom for discernment. I am now suggesting that these same two factors are key reasons why so few young people are entering the religious life today. Indeed, I would venture to predict that successfully achieving true renewal is the key to attracting young people to enter the religious life.

Vatican II pointed out in the decree on renewal of the religious life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, that true renewal requires shared interior renewal of the charism of the Founder, which gives corporate identity to a religious congregation and authentic discernment of ways of expressing this identity in community and ministries, according to the signs of our times. If we become truly renewed, we shall have

clarity about our corporate identity and freedom for discerning, thus overcoming major obstacles placed before young people who might feel called to join us. If we suffer from "slipped" charisms and opposed ideologies about what it means to be a religious or a Roman Catholic or a Christian, and if we clearly have given up our freedom to fixed positions, we shall attract very few, if any, healthy people.

I am optimistic about the efforts of many religious toward true renewal. Although I suspect that quite a number of actual religious congregations will go out of existence, I am convinced that religious life will continue. Fewer persons will enter, but they will be persons radically committed to their true corporate identity and, so, capable of discerning together how to live their vocation authentically according to the signs of the times.

Although coming to clarity about corporate identity and to freedom for discernment is crucial, there are some practical steps I feel we need to take in order to attract young persons to join us.

1. It is vital to provide information to young persons about corporate identity (religious, charism/mission, actual members, community life-styles, present ministries, hopes, dreams, and so on).
2. Nevertheless, the most important task of the vocation director is to be a good spiritual director who can help each individual to bring her or his own experience of God to awareness in order to discern her or his vocation.
3. Clearly, today, great care must be taken in screening candidates, even though fewer apply than we might wish. Human maturity and health and spiritual maturity and health must be at the level demanded in order to enter the religious life today and to grow toward affective fulfillment as consecrated celibates. Certainly, before inviting a person to permanent commitment, there must be moral certainty that the person has truly made interior, unconditional, lifetime commitment to day-by-day creative fidelity in living this vocation. To do otherwise is to do grave injustice to the individual, who has only one life to waste.

RELIGIOUS LIFE'S FUTURE

I feel that young persons called by God to the religious life will respond to this vocation if we who are already called successfully communicate the excitement of being religious today. We live in a time of diminished numbers of religious and of the emerging age of the laity in ministry. This will lead us, I am convinced, to discern radically new ministries through which God calls us to carry out our charismatic missions now. This discernment will lead to conscious decisions to move effectively toward the service of poor and oppressed people, whether they live in poverty or affluence. I suspect that some religious congregations, nevertheless, will

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find that their own charism really does send them to the materially poor and that this will lead them to some radical decisions with respect to life-style and to leaving ministries in which they are now engaged. For example, the issue we face of increasingly insurmountable social, political, and economic obstacles to our hospitals or schools of higher education serving the truly economically poor may well cause some religious congregations (not all!) to discern that authentic fidelity to their charism calls them to turn over to entirely lay ownership and direction hospitals or schools they founded and currently own and operate. Karl Rahner, in *Contemporary Spirituality* (edited by Robert Gleason), said very wisely:

If an order wants to be an order of the evangelical counsels, then, apostolic goals can never become the decisive element in the manner of life to such an extent as practically to do away with evangelical poverty. Not every legitimate goal in the Church has to be (or can be) realized by religious.

Rahner's observation, I think, may be highly relevant to the thorny issue today of religious and politics. Increasing experience of working with lay persons on team ministries will free religious from the "apostolic imperialism," with its implied contempt for the laity, that makes us think that we must do everything ourselves, or at least, be the directors, or else ministries will not be done or, certainly, will not be done *well*. I feel that in the future, religious will find more and more that we are called to be very mobile people with very little baggage, responding to temporary calls. For example, it seems to me that be-

cause of our vocational identity and experience, religious presently can play a vital role in helping persons called to team ministries to form authentic ecclesial communities. For some time, religious, perhaps, will have a role to play in animating leadership of the laity in ministries that we directed in the past. When these processes come to completion, we shall be called to move on to other ministries.

VOCATION TO WITNESS

This life of continual exodus will clarify the radical meaning of a vocation to the religious life in the church as the witnessing, through human lives of vowed renunciation, to the fundamental, eschatological faith of the church that the Kingdom of God, breaking in upon us now, will definitively come when Christ comes again and God will be All in all. People who experience being "seized by Jesus" in a way that demands the response of commitment to vowed, religious life will give themselves totally to carrying out the mission of their charism, which they are perfectly aware that they could carry out without being religious, in whatever ways and with whatever persons the Holy Spirit leads them to discern. They will be aware that the tremendous relevance of their vocation as religious is to bear witness to the contemporary, secularized world to the absolute primacy of the Kingdom of God over every other value.

Relevance of anything is measured by the degree of meaning it has for people *now*. People in our world today, because of their experience of ceaseless war, fear of nuclear holocaust, pollution of the planet, oppression, injustice, poverty, anxiety, guilt, and helplessness in controlling events, are expressing in film and drama and music, in art and literature, in life-styles and flight to drugs and cults, their yearning to find ultimate meaning and to be saved from the body of this death. People in the contemporary, secularized world are desperately looking for saving experience of the transcendent. They are looking for the sacred *in* the secular: God-with-us, Emmanuel. Without realizing it, they are looking for Jesus Christ and yearning for his Kingdom to come. They are looking for the Good News witnessed to by the vowed life of renunciation of religious—the specific meaning of the identity of the religious life vocation within the church. Religious life has never been more relevant than it is today, because its meaning has never had more meaning than it does for our contemporary world.

My dream of the future, then, is that through authentic renewal of the religious life we shall come to clarity about corporate identity and corporate freedom for discernment. This will enable us to communicate to young people how relevant and exciting this life is today, attracting them to enter into discernment of their vocation from God and into readiness to commit themselves unconditionally, if they do discern this to be a call to the religious life.

BOOK REVIEWS

Availability: The Problem and the Gift, by Robert J. Wicks. New York: Paulist Press, 1986. 112 pp. \$5.95.

This is a short, practical book that in the author's words tries to integrate aspects of the spiritualities of Thomas Merton, Henri Nouwen, and Anthony Bloom with key principles in psychology. It is obviously written from the heart as well as from the mind: one senses it as a gift from teacher to pupils, an attempt to give support to those in active ministry.

Availability—the freedom to be present when needed—is a precious and fundamental gift. Wicks leads us through a review of the basic arenas of presence: to oneself, to others, and to God. Here we play out our lives. The extent to which we can be truly and freely present in these arenas—open, alert, attentive, responsive—determines to a large extent the quality of our lives and the degree of our effectiveness in helping ourselves and others to grow.

The heart of the section on openness to self is the chapter on clarity, the ability to see realistically who and what we are. The task is easy to describe in a few paragraphs or pages but a lifetime's work to achieve. Self-knowledge is important: all the best spiritual writers have emphasized it, and all the best therapists strive to help one attain it. One thinks of the common metaphor for psychoanalysis: patiently peeling the countless layers of the onion. It takes time. Fifteen pages, skillful as they are in summarizing and integrating contemporary psychological principles, are not going to achieve the task. But they can emphasize its importance, strengthen our motivation, offer us some directions.

Available to ourselves, we can grow in nonexploitative, growth-inducing relationships with others. And simultaneously grow in our openness and availability to God. These are the next two major sections in the book, and Wicks is eloquent and persuasive in his presentations.

The chapters are brief. The longest of them is fif-

teen pages. They read easily and gracefully but compress a great deal of information and in some areas presuppose a familiarity with basic psychological concepts. The author has included a useful method for using the book as a basis for prayer or an aid in a retreat. Each chapter is followed by a short scriptural selection illustrating a basic theme of the chapter. The author suggests that the chapter first be read and reflected on, then the scripture passage read once or twice and, for twenty or thirty minutes, "allowed to nurture you." This is the best kind of teaching: information is given and a technique offered that helps us make the information part of ourselves. There is a short bibliography and some short notes. There is no index.

This review is written on the feast of St. Irenaeus, one of whose most famous apothegms, written almost eighteen hundred years ago, is "The glory of God is a human being fully alive." I think Irenaeus would approve of Wicks's goals.

—Jon J. O'Brien, S.J., D.O.

Justification by Faith: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue, VII, edited by H. George Anderson, T. Austin Murphy, and Joseph A. Burgess. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985. 381 pp. \$6.95.

The spiritual development of the Christian has been greatly enhanced by progress in psychological scholarship and biblical studies as they have been applied to the human spirit. Among the biblical doctrines most open to renewal in recent years has been the doctrine of grace. The return to a more biblically founded focus on the love of God and the free opening of the human spirit in faith is as often attributed to modern psychology as it is to the 16th century reformer Martin Luther, who returned the attention of the Christian West to Paul's focus on God's overriding, justifying love.

This volume includes the Lutheran/Catholic statement on justification by grace through faith and the background papers supporting it. Because of its illumination of the doctrine of grace and the biblical understanding of God as the loving presence transcending all human works, it will be an important resource for the spiritual director, preacher, and Christian involved in nurturing human development. The agreed statement is itself historic, but its contents are most fruitful as they illumine the doctrine of grace.

Although our understanding of Scripture and of the human psyche have enhanced the ability to foster Christian growth, it is the fundamental understanding of God that is at the very center of both a reformation insight and contemporary Roman Catholic renewal. The authors state:

Everything depends on the biblical view of God. Is God like a certified public accountant? Or is God like a loving father who surprises his adopted children with gifts that are beyond all calculation? The God of the Bible is this loving father. Of course he gives us rewards, but in a very different sense, for his rewards do not depend on what one has done. They are God's incommensurable gift.

Although one will recognize this is not a Lutheran attack on traditional Roman Catholic understanding, in light of the agreed statement included in this book, it is a healthy corrective for much of Roman Catholic piety. Indeed, the most important element in this ecumenical dialogue is its contribution to the understanding of grace, shared by all who confess Jesus Christ as the gift of the loving Father.

In addition to the agreed statement and historical, biblical, and analytical essays on the question of justification, articles by Avery Dulles, Carl Peter, George Lindbeck, and a host of other scholars make a strong contribution to the synthesis of present thinking on grace. It is this understanding of grace that unlocks the prospect of development not only in the ecclesial relationship between Lutherans and Catholics but also between the human spirit and the loving God who justifies us in Jesus Christ.

—Jeffrey Gros, F.S.C., S.T.D.

Pastoral Companionship: Ministry with Seriously Ill Persons and Their Families, by Gerald J. Calhoun, S.J. New York: Paulist Press, 1986. 173 pp. \$8.85.

Gerald Calhoun, a New England Jesuit with a Doctor of Ministry degree in Pastoral Counseling and for eight years director of pastoral counseling at Youville Hospital (a chronic disease and rehabilitation hospital founded by the Grey Nuns) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, offers us the fruits of his learning and experience. The book's first section develops the author's understanding of the ministry—a ministry, in the Lord's name, of companionship in a journey of faith. A second section deals with helping the seriously ill to pray, supporting the decision makers, and in the key essay that develops the book's

title, "accompanying" the dying. The volume's third section is a collection of chapters on practical matters ranging from pursuing justice for the seriously ill to the training of lay ministers, supervising seminarians, and "ministering to the minister."

To be chronically ill is to be vulnerable, to have one's independence taken away, one's self-esteem wounded, one's dependence enhanced. Working with the chronically ill, whether medically or spiritually, is a special and difficult vocation. At the beginning, the essential task is to establish a bridge to the ill person. Each year at Georgetown medical school, as part of our psychiatry program, I work with a group of first-year medical students, coaching them through their first interviews with hospital patients. One of the major tasks is to prime the students to meet the patient on his or her own ground, to be present and to dialogue with him or her where he or she is. The students' anxieties have to be brought under control, and all the students' strong (and natural) wishes that the patient's health be improving, that the patient be preparing to return home to a good supporting family and good supportive environment, need to be brought into contact with the sometimes unpleasant and always imperfect realities of the patients' lives. Pastoral counselors need to learn similar lessons.

In dealing with patients and their families in the course of a protracted illness, all parties must be concerned about patience, about maintaining hope in the light of realistic expectations, and about avoiding burnout. (These have been especially acute problems in recent years for people working with AIDS patients and are perennial in cancer wards.) At the illness's end, we need to be able to reach closure, to separate, to let the person go without abandoning him or her.

The book is written out of the author's personal experience. I think its message and its techniques have a very broad applicability. We are, as Americans, living longer, and although most of our aged are in good health, many are not, and in our neighborhoods, parishes, families, or religious congregations, we need to come to terms with this reality. The book helps us to do this, particularly with its very practical suggestions for extending and expanding the system of helpers.

The book's title and theme remind me of the old term for the Eucharist at the time of preparation for death: *viaticum*. "Via-te-cum": I, the Christ, your savior, shall be with you on the way, on the path of your transition through death to new life with me. The ministry to the ill and dying has, from the passage of Matthew 25 through the "spiritual works of mercy," long been held in special esteem among Christians. Its need remains constant, and this book will enable us to respond in a timely and compassionate manner.

—Jon J. O'Brien, S.J., D.O.

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